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The Role of Parent Members of School Governing Bodies in School Financial Management

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master in Education

By

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Abstract

This study reports on the role of Parent Governors in School Financial Management in six high schools situated in Metro South Education District in the Western Cape. The study also explored parental participation in financial processes at school level and its relation to their knowledge, skills, expertise and responsibilities as required by the South African Schools Act.

Qualitative data was gathered using interviews with principals, educators and parents, questionnaires were issued to parents with specific and open ended questions and observation. Data analysis was compared within Quintiles and across Quintiles. Major themes that emerged were Financial Documents and processes, Training and Skills, Attitude and the Role of the Principal. Findings revealed that parents lack capacity to manage the funds. Parent governing body members are influenced by a number of factors; Literacy levels, competency, context, work demands, willingness to assist and time. Parents are heavily reliant on educators and the principal in performing the required role. The study concludes that, the parents have a positive attitude towards financial management however they are not skilled and there is no initiative taken by schools to empower the parents. Secondly there is no significant difference in parental involvement in financial management between a Section 21 and a Section 20 School within and between Quintiles.

List of Acronyms

SASA :	South African Schools Act
SGB:	School Governing Body
FINCOM:	Finance Committee
NQ2:	National Quintile 2
NQ3:	National Quintile 3
NQ5:	National Quintile 5
WCED:	Western Cape Education Department

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Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

1.1 Introduction

In many countries the management of schools has been decentralised placing more of the responsibility for school education on the community (Bisschoff and Mestry 2005). In South Africa responsibility has been decentralised to SGB's which now have to take a leading role; within the framework the policies, of the governance of schools. This was for both democratising schools and also redressing the legacy of the past. In South Africa these tasks are placed on parent governors by the South African Schools Act of no 84 of 1996 (SASA).

In South Africa, prior to 1994, statutory school level structures existed as school committees, school boards or management councils. These structures consisted of parents who had very limited decision making powers. In 1996 the new democratic state published a White Paper on Organisation Governance and Funding of schools, Republic of South Africa (1996), from which emanated the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996.

The promulgation of the (SASA) gave shape to the guiding principles for education in South Africa. The main aims were access, redress, equity and democratic governance. SASA aimed at redressing past exclusions and facilitating transformation to support representation and participation in the schools (Tsotetsi et al, 2008:386). It became operative at the beginning of 1997 and mandated that all public state schools in South Africa must have democratically elected SGBs.

While the Act specifies a number of tasks including managing finances, this thesis is about the role of parent members of the School Governing body in financial management at school. The study looks at 6 Secondary Schools in Metro South District, Cape town, Western Cape, South Africa focussing on the role of parent governors when they perform the financial management function as stipulated by (SASA).

With respect to school finances, the focus of this study, SASA provides guidelines to SGBs and principals on their roles and responsibilities in managing school finances. The following are the stipulated roles of the SGB in school financial management:

- To start and administer a school fund, Section 37(1).
 - Open and maintain one banking account, Section 37 (3).
 - Keep the financial records of the school, Section 42(a).
 - Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval, Section 38.
 - Draw up and submit financial statements to the Department of education, Section 42 (b) and 43 (5))
 - Buy text books and educational material for the school, Section 20 and 21.
 - Supplement the fund supplied by the Department of Education to improve the quality of education, Section 36.
 - Ensure that school fees are collected according to the decisions that were made by the school governing body, Section 39 – 41.
 - Decide on application for exemption from school fees.
- (SASA 1996)

1.2 Statement of the problem

Parent members of the School Governing Body have a challenge in translating the Act into action (Mestry 2006). According to Chisolm et al (2003:246), the decentralised mode of Governance at schools that was proposed by the White Paper 2 has major challenges. For example it was clear that there is no clarity between the role of the parents and the role of the head teachers and In South Africa many School Governing Bodies are placed under pressure to manage funds due to lack of skills (Mestry 2006:28). The SGB is given full responsibility to manage finances at school, among other things this includes establishing a school fund, and preparing a budget annually, collecting and administer school fees as well as keeping financial records and statements (Davies 1999:64). According to Van Wyk (2004:53), the SGB's have capacity problems and are not well trained. He further argues that the parent governors simply sign cheques and do not work according to the budget. Based on the above, the study therefore seeks to investigate the role played by parent governors in managing finances at school.

1.3 Aims of the Research

The aim of this research project is:

- To explore the role of parent governors in school financial management.
- To determine the extent to which the parent governors are able to carry out their stipulated functions.
- To ascertain the level of knowledge, attitudes and skills of the parent governors against the financial management responsibility.
- To recommend ways in which the challenges encountered by the parent governors in SGB's can be dealt with.

Against the above background, the research problem is encapsulated in the following questions:

1.4 Research Questions

The key main Question is: What is the nature of the Parent governor participation in school financial management?

The study purports to address the following critical questions prompted by the main research question:

1. What role do parent governors play in school financial management?
2. How financial processes are managed and governed at school level and to what extent are parent governors involved in these processes?
3. What, if any, is the nature of the differences in parent governor involvement in managing finances between Section 21 and Section 20 schools within and across Quintiles?
4. Is parents' participation in school financial management related to their knowledge of their responsibilities?

1.4 Rationale and Purpose of Research

Parental involvement in Education through the Board of Governors have been widely reported. However fewer studies have been conducted in Sub Saharan Africa and this suggests that this area has not affected many researchers attention (Onderi and Makori 2012). Financial management is a critical aspect of school governance as it impacts on central operations at school. When school financial management is not in order it undermines the very existence of the school. This view is corroborated by Mestry (2004:126) when he notes that many schools are victims of mismanagement or misappropriation of funds in the form of theft, fraud and embezzlement. There are many principals and SGB members who lack the necessary financial knowledge and skills and consequently are placed under tremendous pressure because they are unable to work out practical solutions to practical problems. Specifically this thesis explores what parent governors see as their role in school financial management within the framework of the South African School's Act.

While SASA stipulates certain roles for governing bodies in managing the school finances there are challenges faced by schools in translating policy into practice. The study aims to improve understanding of the implementation of SASA stipulations, examines the nature of parental involvement in finance committees of the SGBs and also examines the reasons why parents participate in these structures in the ways that they do. This study will provide guidance and recommendations to improve the role of parent governors in the financial management of schools evaluated in the study.

As a principal, professionally, I have observed that parent governors carry out their roles as financial overseers of the school in a hesitating and uncertain fashion. Added to this is the phenomenon that when Finance Committee (FINCOM) meetings are held they are either not fully constituted or in rare instances such meetings are never held at all. Furthermore I was curious as to whether the principal's role in financial management affected the way parents operate. Further to this I rationalised that there was a definite link between parental participation and their ability to perform SASA stipulations. Adding impetus to this rationale was Mncube, (2009), who claimed that parents are not yet playing their full role as governors as mandated

by legislation.

To examine the role of parents in the financial management of schools, 6 high schools were used as case studies. They were segmented by Quintiles (NQ 5, 3 and 2) and by financial status – Section 20 and Section 21. The assumptions here were that higher Quintile schools would be better managed than lower Quintile schools and that Section 21 schools, equally would be better managed than Section 20 schools. In each school the principal, two educators, and two (SGB) members were interviewed while 5 SGB parents completed questionnaires.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

1.5.1 Decentralisation in Education

Policies of education decentralisation have become a key aspect of educational restructuring in the international arena (Sayed, 1999: 141 and Squelch 1999:127). Attempts at education decentralisation are evident in the 1988 Education Reform Act in England and Wales, The Tomorrows School Report of the Australian government, the Dutch Education system since 1982 and in Brazilian education since the 1980s. While the reasons for decentralisation vary, Tsotetsi et al, (2008) the decentralisation concept originated from the fact that the state cannot control schools alone.

Suzuki (2002) states that government decentralisation means to hierarchically redistribute the power and responsibilities within the system, which leads to relocating the point of decision making closer to local people. Suzuki (2002) maintains that decentralisation involves transferring financial responsibilities to the local governments and further to the community or giving more decision making authority to the local institution such as school governing bodies.

The new education system encourages community participation and all features of democratic decision making. However mere promulgation of policy does not necessarily however imply effective implementation.

According to Chikoko (2008:247), in Zimbabwe it was evident that although there

legal decentralised school governance structures in which the parents form the majority, parents still do not have the capacity to function effectively and are still marginalised in school governance and decision making. The argument develops by stating that because parents in rural areas have basic literacy skills, they therefore find it difficult to cope with the demands of school governance. Most of the decision making power still lies in the hands of professionals especially school heads.

Chikoko (2008:249-250) then notes that, decentralised decision making should not be regarded as a uniform phenomenon worldwide, because different countries have different objectives for devolving power. Decisions on school finances however tend to be commonly decentralised. Due to the fact that the Zimbabwean state was not capable of financing education single - handedly the School Development Committees had to make greater financial contributions to fund education.

South Africa's historical development policy choices made during the political landscape and education transformation culminated in the concept of decentralisation and SASA (Department of Education, 2004:38). Decentralisation has been evident in South Africa in the call for parental participation in schooling. In South Africa decentralisation of school governance means important decision making responsibilities have developed from the state central government to self - governing communities, as school governing bodies (Adams and Waghid 2005). Scholars like Sayed (1999) cautioned however that, the issue of decentralisation might be problematic in the South African context as it may result in educational inequalities along class lines instead of race lines.

Decentralisation means that parents have to be involved in their children's schooling.

1.5.2 Parental Involvement

Suzuki (2002:243) notes that in the field of education participation has been much debated with different emphasis and implications in the developed and the developing world. The recent focus in the United Kingdom and the United States of America is on parental participation in forms of choice and of schools and involvement in school governance while in developing countries the debate centres on community participation in school construction and financial management.

Bush and Heystek (2003:112) write that there has been a major shift to self - governance for schools in many countries. This trend encompasses England, Wales, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain certain parts of the USA and South Africa. This view is corroborated by Bush and Gamage (2001:39) as they also posit that similar trends in these countries exist as means for accountability.

The composition of governing bodies is similar in most countries, comprising of parents, educators, community representatives and the principal. In England there is a representative of the support staff which makes it similar to the model used in South Africa. The only difference between South Africa and England is the fact that South Africa also has the learner component at secondary schools and that co-opted members have voting rights in England but not in South Africa (Bush and Heystek, 2003:131).

School governance is portrayed as the story of how ordinary people obtain a say in running a school (Gann, 1998:7), while Tsotetsi et al (2008:367) add that this decentralisation discourse presupposes that all major stakeholders have a clear understanding of what running a school entails.

The level of participation of parent governors in schooling is crucial to their ability to perform school governance functions. Parents do not always have the necessary skills required to perform these functions. Another factor is that parents are not always available to perform governance functions due to work commitments and also due to the fact that the parent governors seem to have a lot of confidence in educators and therefore expect educators to make such decisions.

International experience illustrates some of these difficulties. In the Zimbabwean case there is a general lack of interest from parents to be involved in school activities, most efforts to invite parents to curriculum issues and open days are unsuccessful at most schools. This is because parents shoulder many responsibilities in their homes and some have work commitments while some have literacy challenges (Chikoko, 2008:253). Although parent governors in Zimbabwe proved to be actively involved in managing school finances, there was an indication

of lack of financial management skills on the part of parent governors. Parents in Zimbabwe wanted to take the lead in all financial decisions but lacked the essential skills for example to prepare budgets and projects proposals in search of funding.

From my experience and cases like these I want to argue that parent governors are legally empowered, but practically disempowered. The Act expects parent governors to perform certain roles, practically this does not seem to materialise and therefore practically they are not empowered to perform the task. Parent governors do not have the capacity to function effectively in making decisions about school finances, this point is corroborated by Chikoko (2008:260) and these decisions are made by school heads in most areas. For Chikoko (2008), and I agree, the intended policy of empowering parents in school governance is unintentionally disempowering them at the same time.

According to the educational policy of 1997 in Uganda every Primary school is required by law to have a school governing body called School Management Committees (SMC) and this committee is expected to manage and implement Universal Primary Education (UPE). Schools receive a grant from government and it is stressed by government that it is important for SMC's to manage these funds. The 1969 educational act stipulates that SMC's should comprise of PTA's chairperson and a treasurer.

In Uganda it was revealed that there were apparent disparities in parental involvement at school level. This was influenced by several factors like gender, religion, economic status and educational level. It was also found that the decision making activity was predominantly held by husbands and therefore women were reluctant to make their own decisions in PTA meetings (Suzuki 2002:256). The above structural dimensions obstruct equal representation of different groups and therefore hinder participation of the wider public.

The 1980 Education Act made it compulsory for each school in England and Wales to have a governing body and for this purpose it established the requirement for parent and teacher representation (Field, 1993:1, Farrel & Law, 1999:5). This legislation was driven partly by a desire to promote local accountability in schools

(Beckett, Bell and Rhodes, 1991:9). In United Kingdom a 'Responsibility Survey' was carried out for several years by the National association of Governors and Managers and it was consistent that the weight of the responsibility placed on parents is too much.

School governing bodies in South Africa have been established to implement government policies at the local school level and difficulties manifested elsewhere are seen here too. Before members can implement educational policies, they need to understand them well. (Baffour2006) purports that many school governing body members especially in rural schools do not have sufficient reading skills to enable them to read, interpret and understand educational policies. Wide spread support is not sufficient to ensure success of parent governors, there is a great need for capacity building especially in South Africa. Tsotetsi et al, (2008:386) support this view by stating that sound training should be provided for proper discharge of the multiple duties bestowed upon school governing bodies. I want to argue that South Africa has had parent governors for 17 years. The governors get training, some parents are serving for more than two terms, but there is still no improvement in the way governors perform.

There is a major need to train governing bodies in South Africa (Department of Education, 1997).The Department therefore spends a considerable amount of money training parent governors, the question is, does this solve the problem? Why South Africa is still faced with challenges of policy implementation? Should we be expecting parents to perform this role? Is it practical or feasible to expect parent governors to be doing this daunting task? Is the Act implementable or is it in fact symbolic?

Educators in South Africa including those in rural areas have a duty of interpreting government circulars to parents pertaining to school governance. The educators need to sit from time to time with parents explaining their role and unfortunately this process delays most of the programmes since it takes a lot of time to get parents on the same page as the educators before the projects can be implemented (Baffour, 2006).

From the above statement it is clear that in areas where SGB parent members have a literacy or numeracy challenge, no amount of training will enable the parent component of the governing body to function effectively. The challenge is deeper than a mere translation and interpretation of the Act. Parent governing body members are influenced by a number of factors. Literacy levels, competency, context, work demands and willingness to assist.

Mncube (2009) laments the case of parents who are not yet stepping into their full capacity as governors and not fulfilling their role as mandated by policy. Rural school seem to bear the brunt of this neglect, as reluctance on the part of many parents to participate in School Governing Bodies (SGBs) at such school are generally higher. On the one hand, this is primarily as a result of their own low levels of education, but contentions over power and position within SGBs also constitute part of the problem. On the other hand, inadequacies in the preparation of parents for the roles designated to them in former model C schools tend to lead to elevated lack of participation in school activities, which heightens the fear among such parents of so-called 'academic victimisation' of their children. Not as pronounced as some of these factors aforementioned are the issues of language and the difficulty or complete inability to attend meetings. These challenges inhibit the democratic function of SGBs, even though the perception remains that representation and debate are in theory fair and transparent processes.

Governing body members should be sufficiently trained. However studies conducted on training of governing body members in South African schools alludes to infrequent short and sometimes haphazard presentations by ill equipped service providers (Bush and Heystek 2005:178). The question is will South Africa reach a stage where governing body training serves the purpose it is intended for? Budget monitoring and control is a specialised activity and therefore requires someone with expert knowledge and skills. The argument continues by stating that many township school governors do not have the skill. Although the South African Schools Act allows for people with skills to be co-opted it is difficult to find qualified people in the township and sometimes they are unwilling to assist. I want to argue that it is not a matter of parents willing to participate in financial management at school level, but also what they could contribute.

1.6 Exposition of Chapters

Against this background the rest of the study follows the following format:

Chapter Two Parental Involvement in School Financial Management

This Chapter discusses the literature review. Training, skills and the level of education for parent governors as well as the principal and the parent governor role are also discussed.

Chapter Three Research design and methods

This chapter explains the rationale for choosing the case study method and the choice of selected schools. Research instruments, interviews, and questionnaires are discussed. Site selection and sample justification are also explained.

Chapter Four Data presentation and discussion

This chapter presents the main findings of the research, which are based on the analysis of the interviews with 6 principals, 12 educators and 12 SGB parent members, as well as an analysis of 30 questionnaires completed by the other parents serving on the schools' SGBs. The study is done using 6 secondary schools in Quintiles 2, 3 and 5 and the schools are Section 20 and Section 21.

Chapter Five Summary and Conclusion

Chapter Five discusses conclusion and recommendations based on the interpretation from the analysis process in Chapter 4.

1.7 Clarification of concepts

1.7.1 School Governing Body

A School Governing Body is a body that governs the school while the principal focuses on financial management. It comprises of the principal as an ex officio member, educator representatives, non-teaching staff and learner representatives. This body is elected tri-annually through a democratic process. This body determines the policies that govern the school and the principal sees to the implementation process.

1.7.2 National Quintiles

All South African public ordinary schools are categorised into five groups, called quintiles, largely for purposes of the allocation of financial resources. Quintile one is the 'poorest' quintile, while quintile five is the 'least poor'. These poverty rankings are determined nationally according to the poverty of the community around the school, as well as, certain infrastructural factors. Each quintile, nationally, contains 20% of all learners, but not 20% from each province. Schools in Quintile 1, 2 and 3 have been declared no-fee schools, while schools in quintiles 4 and 5 are fee-paying schools.

The Western Cape has relatively lower levels of poverty compared to the rest of the country. However, in-migration and the current economic situation, results in many communities feeling increasing economic pressures. A school's quintile ranking is important as it determines the amount of funding that it receives each year and whether or not the school can charge fees. Therefore, in order to compensate these schools for their loss in fee income, the state provides them with a larger Norms and Standards allocation than schools classified as "fee-paying" schools in Quintiles 4 and 5.

Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 schools receive the same amount per learner and that is R1059. The recommended per learner allocation for each quintile is determined by the National Department of Basic Education.

Western Cape currently provides an average allocation to NQ5 schools of R250 per learner instead. The Norms and Standards allocation to schools is then used by

schools to finance various school items and payments such as:

- Municipal services - such as water and electricity.
- Stationery and learning support materials - such as textbooks and readers.
- Equipment - such as a fax machine for administrative purposes.
- Maintenance and repairs - such as the maintenance of the toilets or the fixing of basic repairs.

While the allocations differ significantly between Quintile 4 and 5 and Quintiles 1-3, Quintile 4 and 5 schools charge school fees, which should essentially make up for the additional funding needed to run the school. This is planned for during the budget and fee setting processes by the SGB and presented to a meeting of parents. However, given the circumstances of some schools, their quintile ranking of Quintile 4 and 5, does not work in their favour. For example, the national data that has been used to determine their poverty status does not take into account the demographics of specific schools. There are schools which do not draw their majority enrolments from the local area (there may not be children of school going age in the area). Some of these schools then educate significant numbers of children from families which cannot meet the fee arrangements at their children's schools. This has been a significant source of financial pressure for these schools. Parent governors have to be equipped to deal with these kinds of pressures.

The state has an obligatory duty to fund schools and the schools are obligated and accountable to the state. According to the school's Act all public schools have compulsory functions under Section 20. Schools that have the capacity may apply for additional allocated functions under Section 21. I am interested in looking at the two types of schools as I want to identify the differences if any, in the role of the parent governors in these schools.

According to the DoE, (Circular 0054/2014) schools have to spend the allocated amount as follows: 30 % must be spent on learner support material of which 10% should be library support material, education material and equipment and curriculum needs. Each learner must have a text book for each subject. 25% must be spent on maintenance and repairs to buildings. 25% on payment and services such as municipality services etc. and 20 % for local purchases. These schools may only acquire goods and services from authorised suppliers determined by the provincial

department of education. This is done through a process of filling in requisition forms that need to be submitted to the department.

Another function of the SGB is preparing and drawing up an annual budget for the school. This is applicable to both Section 20 and Section 21 schools. To draw up a school's budget one has to go further back, to the school's mission to find the roots of the priorities.

Mestry (2004) notes that, the SGB may delegate in writing the responsibility of managing the finances to the finance committee. Some of the most important functions of the finance committee are to develop and implement a Finance Policy, to construct a budget and keep control of it and to ensure that all procurement is done through correct quotation and tendering procedures. The above clearly indicates that the finance committee plays a major role in managing finances at school level.

1.7.3 Section 20 and Section 21 Schools

Within the stipulated regulations there is variation because there are two types of schools. The South African schools' Act 84 of 1996 creates two categories of public schools namely Section 20 Schools also known as non-Section 21 Schools and Section 21 Schools.

1.7.3.1 Section 20 schools

These are the schools which have not applied for a Section 21 status. These schools are in this category either by choice as they did not apply for a Section 21 status or due to the fact that they do not qualify to be granted a Section 21 status for a number of factors. These schools receive a paper allocation from the state meaning that most of their allocation is not in cash. Section 20 schools present a paper budget to DoE and purchases are made against the budgeted items. The DoE then procure goods on the school's behalf and administer the budget on behalf of the school using the department's suppliers.

A disadvantage of being a Section 20 school is that the school does not get to negotiate with the suppliers, secondly these suppliers are not always effective and, thirdly the process usually takes very long.

There is however an advantage to being a Section 20 school as the Department is obligated to pay for all the services including any shortfalls that might be against the budget.

1.7.3.2 Section 21 schools.

These schools have to qualify by showing that they can perform financial functions effectively. These schools are self-reliant and thought to be well managed financially; the performance is according to the expectations of the DoE. The Department of Education is obligated to determine whether the school has managerial capacity to be self-reliant in managing finances (DoE 2002:17).

- The schools known as Section 21 schools have more financial freedom than the Section 20 schools mentioned above and the onus is on the specific school to be disciplined in managing finances.

According to SASA, a governing body may apply to the Head of Department in writing to be allocated any of the following functions:

- To maintain and improve the school's property and buildings and grounds occupied by learners at the school, including school hostels if applicable.
- To determine the extra – mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy.
- To purchase text books, educational materials or equipment for the school;
- To pay for services at the school

For Section 21 schools the state's allocation is paid directly into the school's bank account; however the schools have to comply with all the regulations stipulated in the South African School's Act. The school has to submit audited financial statements within the first six months of the following year and Section 21 schools are also required to utilise allocations in the same manner as the Section 20 schools. The advantage of being a Section 21 school is the flexibility to manage funds and to negotiate directly with the suppliers.

1.8 Conclusion

Against this background the first chapter provides an overview of the scope of the study, by outlining the rationale and purpose of the research, i.e. that purpose of the research study is to critically evaluate the role of parent governors in school financial management; listing the critical questions – flowing out of the main research question that the study seeks to answer; and thereafter reviews decentralisation of governance functions in South Africa against the backdrop of international developments, critically examines the implications of decentralisation for the role that parents play in school governance and then ends by the clarification of concepts and a brief synopsis of each of the remaining four chapters. The next chapter discusses the SASA.

Chapter 2: Parental Involvement in school Financial Management

Introduction

The promulgation of the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 ushered in a new era in how schools were to be governed in South Africa. In order to give effect to the major tenets of the new democratic order many aspects of school management and governance that were formerly administered by central government, were decentralised and shifted to school level. In addition, South African schools were categorised into National Quintiles for the allocation of financial resources. Furthermore schools could also elect to be classified as either Section 20 or 21 schools under the Act, with major implications for the powers assigned to school governing bodies based on such a choice.

This chapter provides a detailed critical analysis of the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 and the implication thereof for the functioning of School Governing Bodies. The chapter also takes a critical look on implementation challenges with regards to the Finance Committee, Finance Policy, Parental attitudes towards their financial management responsibility, Training, skills and the level of education of the parent governors as well the Role of the principal.

2.1 The Role of Parent Governors in School Financial Management

Schools 2.1.1 South African Schools Act

Bisschoff and Mestry (2005:3) argue that school financial management is the performance of management actions connected with the financial actions of schools, with the main aim of achieving effective education, and should be carried out by a person in a position of authority. School financial management can also be seen as a

process of ensuring that the SGB and school management team plan, organise, delegate and control the funds of the school in such a way to achieve its goals.

My interest then is to look at the stipulations of the SASA and investigate what the parent governors see as their role in fulfilling the Act requirements when managing finances at school.

The following areas will be discussed, General Financial Provisions, Decentralisation to SGB's and The Stipulated Roles.

General Financial Provisions

- Section 12 (1) of the South African School's Act stipulates that the member of the executive council (of the provincial legislature) must provide public schools for the education of learners out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the provincial legislature.
- The state must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the rights of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities in education provision.
- The state must, on an annual basis provide sufficient information to public schools regarding the funding referred to in subsection 1 to enable public schools to prepare their budget for the next financial year (SASA, 1996).

Decentralisation to SGB's

Brown and Duku (2008:432) argue that broad masses of people, regardless of socio economic situations and racial divide are now able to have a voice in the decisions that affect them directly or indirectly in school communities. The Act provides for decentralisation of power to school level through establishing of school governing bodies with powers. Brown and Duku (2008) define school governance as a feature of school leadership in South African schools and portray it as part of the processes and systems by which the school operates.

The Stipulated Roles

FINANCIAL FUNCTION FOR THE SGB

- SASA stipulates the following
School funds and Assets

School gets funding from state subsidy, school fees and donations and fundraising.

No fee schools mostly rely on the state subsidy

Section 37 of SASA requires schools to open a bank account.

- **Financial Audit and Finance Reporting**

The SGB need to know that the SGB and not the principal is responsible for all matters relating to finance.

It is the governors' responsibility to see that policies are in place which explicitly set out how the school's money must be handled.

SGB may delegate duties to the principal, SMT, bursar but it remains responsible and liable should serious problems arise.

All policies that have specific implications for the school's budget and management of funds and assets need to be in place. (Clarke, A 2012; 150)

- **Budget**

Section 38 of SASA – SGB must prepare a budget

Budget – mission statement of a school expressed in monetary terms (Bischoff 2003:65)

It should reflect the school's objectives and be subjected to regular monitoring.

Before the school's budget is approved, it must be presented to parents at a general meeting on at least 30 days' notice.

- **Financial Records**

Section 42 of SASA requires SGB to maintain financial records and draw up an annual financial statement at the end of each financial year.

The SGB may delegate this to the FINCOM.

- **Annual Financial Audit**

Section 42 of SASA requires SGB to submit to school's annual audited statements to the Department of Education within 6 months after the end of a financial year.

These should be made available on request to any parent or member for the public.

Schools 2.1.2 Implementation challenges

SASA no 84 of 1996 advocates for a full participatory school governance philosophy where all stakeholders fully take part. As a theoretical construct this view is widely held and in many cases well supported, although in practice this is not actively pursued. Either parents and learners are not afforded opportunities for active participation in school governance matters or they themselves do not reciprocate and instead window dress their involvement and hide behind what Mncube (2008) refers to as tokenism. Mncube (2009) locates the epicentre of parental despair as having to do with what is comfortable for parents, suggesting that for example parents tend to be more comfortable when the demands of their involvement offer them private as opposed to public involvement.

The functioning of SGBs is further exacerbated by inherited inequalities. This view is corroborated by (Gilmour 2001) who shows that the inherited inequalities are enormous, both within and between provinces. For example, he states that the more perverse problems are pupil–teacher ratios; the quality of the infrastructure; buildings and equipment Gilmour (2001). The implications of this statement are that these are problems that can have a greater impact on the negative functioning of SGBs. One area where governing bodies are expected to make a difference relates to the area of school finances. According to (Gilmour 2001:11) there is no provision made for schools to exclude learners whose parents do not have exemptions and still do not pay fees. Anecdotal evidence suggest that some schools are so heavily in debt and this problem cannot be addressed by governing bodies on their own as they are caught between government policy and parent power.

Arguing about the inherited inequalities in South African schools, and the poor functioning of these schools, Christie (1998) contends that the main features of these schools are the: disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals and the educators, demotivation and low morale of students and teachers; poor school results; conflict and violence in and around schools and school facilities in a generally poor state of repairs Christie (1998:283–284). These are conditions within which SGBs have to operate, but immature governing bodies are unlikely to be able to make a big impact on these problems without substantial support from regional

bodies, even with increases in recurrent funding. Sayed (1999), has a different view, He argues that the distribution of power in South African education needs to be reviewed and there should be careful examination of the optimal balance between citizen participation and state regulation in the governance of education (Sayed 1999:150).

For Adams and Waghid (2005) the problems seem to arise when the Act and its implementation are at variance with each other, this means that the practice of school governance particularly in disadvantaged schools seems to be contrary to what the Act purports. Tsotetsi et al (2008:395) purport that one rationale for decentralising school governance is that it will improve decision making and this will then result in more effective use of resources and contribute to more effective practices and outcomes. However it may also be that skills required are not simply acquired by skilling people. This will be investigated further in the research.

The next section then explores general implementation challenges with regards to Finance Committee, Finance Policy, and Parental Attitudes towards Financial management, Skills, Training and the level of education of Parent Governors as well as The Role of the principal.

2.1.2.1 Finance Committee

Mestry (2004) states that the school governing body may delegate in writing the responsibility of managing the finances to the finance committee (FINCOM) and some of the most important functions of the finance committee are to develop and implement a Finance Policy, to construct a budget and keep control of it and to ensure that all procurement is done through correct quotation and tendering procedures. The above clearly indicates that the Finance Committee plays a major role in managing finances at school level.

Although the Finance Committee plays a pivotal role in finance management at schools ironically the school governing body is accountable for the school funds. It has been proven by many scholars that school governing bodies are not appropriately equipped to manage school funds (Bush and Heystek 2003). The level of education plays a significant role in the way in which budget monitoring and control is perceived. Due to scarcity of financial management skills among governors at many township schools the preparation of effective budgets to fulfil many identified

functions is unlikely, (Mestry and Naidoo, 2008).

Controlling and monitoring the budget is a daily task with regular monitoring and expenditure in a challenging environment and sometimes quick decisions have to be made. The evaluation of the budget requires accountancy skills and that the financial committee members must know about the school's financial life and also have the ability to translate that to figures and facts that they see on paper (Mestry and Naidoo 2008:109).

2.1.2.2 Finance Policy

The South African Schools Act advocates democratic school governance putting a huge role on parents, but does not seem to take note of the composition of township school communities where many parents are either only functionally or marginally literate and often less numerate (Mestry and Naidoo 2008:109). Mestry and Naidoo (2008) further argue that communities in which most South African township schools are situated are not equipped to perform financial management duties as expected by the policy and therefore the expectations of policy as a window to the world are not realised at school level. Although the law stipulates that Parent governors should establish and implement a Finance Policy, that goal is not always realised. Creese and Early (1999:100) argue that there is a contrast between the intention of legislation and what happens in reality hence many SGB'S in the country struggle to translate the Finance Policy into action.

2.1.2.3 Attitudes towards Financial management

The Ministerial Review Committee (2004:82) highlighted the unifying ability of SGBs, but many scholars rejected this view. (Karlsen 1999; Sayed & Soudien 2005), Instead they argued that conflicts and dilemmas among its membership are central to the experience of school governance. Many tensions exist in SGBs. They are seen as steeply middle-class in identity, and have been accused of normalizing parental participation in middle-class terms (Brown & Duku, 2008). Brown & Duku (2008) further contend that school governing bodies are fraught with social tension, rejection, domination, and psychological stress. This in turn leads to isolation to those parents from those participants who have low socio-economic status and who do not fall within middle-class category; as such their participation is compromised

Brown (2005).

Further they contend that another criticism is that it assumes parents have the resources and time to spend on school activities (Sayed & Soudien, 2005). Existing research suggests that socio-economic status (SES) acts as a paralysis to how some parents participate in school governing bodies (Ministerial Review Committee, 2004). The above view is corroborated, by Mncube (2005) who highlighted a number of factors leading to the lack of parents' participation on SGBs, namely: unequal power relations, socio-economic status, lack of confidence and expertise caused by the absence or lack training, poor communication of information, the rural-urban divide, different cultural expectations of diverse communities, language barriers, poor organisation and the high turnover rate of governors (Mncube 2005

2.1.2.4 Skills Training and The level of education of SGB members

Although the Act theoretically provides spaces for democratic transformation, problems arise when the Act has to be transformed into practise. For, Adams and Waghid (2005:25) there is lack of training which prevents the governors from fulfilling their duties effectively and this deficiency in training is at variance with the act as it stipulates enhancement of capacity of governing bodies. There is a clear lack of formal training for SGBs and the tendency to rely on what the principal says due to lack of knowledge.

Although the Finance Committee plays a pivotal role in finance management at schools, legally the SGB is accountable for the school funds. However, as indicated, research shows that SGBs are not appropriately equipped to manage school funds and in addition the level of education of SGB members play a significant role in the way in which budget monitoring and control is perceived. Adams and Waghid (2005:25) also stated that there is a lack of training which prevents the governors from fulfilling their duties effectively. Due to scarcity of financial management skills among governors at many township schools the preparation of effective budgets to fulfil many identified functions is unlikely (Bush and Heystek 2003; Mestry and Naidoo 2008). The evaluation of the budget requires accounting skills and the financial committee members must know about the school's financial life and also have the ability to translate that to figures and facts that they see on paper (Mestry

and Naidoo 2008:109). Because principals have always been the authority figures to make decisions, parent governors require training in participatory decision making. Literacy levels and educational background are pivotal in making the training a success. South Africa has a vast diverse and unique situation where the issue of literacy and educational background of governors is very complex. Governors have a low level of education and therefore cannot understand the language of the policy. The training of SGBs thus remains a priority for the successful functioning of SGBs. Training should ensure that all SGB members understand their roles and responsibilities within the school and can only succeed if school governors possess the required competencies (Tsotetsi et al 2008:387).

Onderi and Makori (2013:65) also state that Governors should be people with commitment, competence and experience. They further state that it is essential for these parent governors to get sufficient training. In a study conducted by (Van Wyk 2007) educators indicated that the parent governors lack confidence and are not sure about their duties; other factors that contributed to that were the literacy levels, lack of interest and lack of training. The lack of government commitment and the timing of the training were also foregrounded as the key contributing factors to the ineffectiveness of the parents serving on the SGB.

In many countries around the world the governing bodies have an extensive task that has become complicated. The governors therefore require certain competencies and abilities in order to govern schools effectively. Training however still remains a priority Onderi and Makori (2013:67). Although the Act theoretically provides spaces for democratic transformation, problems arise when the Act has to be transformed into practice. There is lack of training which prevents the governors from fulfilling their duties effectively and this deficiency in training is at variance with the Act as it stipulates enhancement of capacity of governing bodies (Adams and Waghid, 2005:25). There is a clear lack of formal training for school governing bodies and the tendency to rely on what the principal says due to lack of knowledge.

Karlsson (2002:331) posits that school governing bodies' tasks are extensive and complicated and some functions are contingent on the social conditions of schools as well as capacity differences in school governing bodies. For Heystek, (2006:482)

poorly educated parents lack management expertise and find difficulty in interpreting the contents of the South African Schools Act. This comes down to the point of entrenching existing social inequalities at schools. Lewin, (1998:261) argues that although parents have more knowledge of local conditions, they often know very little about larger educational issues that are very important in determining an appropriate course of action.

Karlsson (2002:132) further states that unless all governance functions and responsibilities are equally accessible and practiced in schools the democratisation of schooling in South Africa is tenuous and nothing more than policy rhetoric. The South African Schools Act represents a sophisticated form of democratic school management and can only be successful if school governors possess the required competencies (Tsetetsi et al 2008:387). The ability of parent governors to govern schools depends on their skills, knowledge and experience of governance including financial skills. Because principals have always been the authority figures to make decisions, parent governors require training in participatory decision making.

Literacy levels and educational background are pivotal in making the training a success. South Africa has a vast adverse and unique situation where the issue of literacy and educational background of governors is very complex. The training of school governing bodies' remains a priority for the successful functioning of school governing bodies. Training should ensure that all school governing body members understand their roles and responsibilities within the school. Arguing about the training of governing bodies, I share a different view that this is an ideal situation that does not always happen in practice, as competency, knowledge and the relevant skills are essential if SASA is to be implemented as stipulated.

2.1.2.5 The Principal and the Parent Governor Role

Some of the challenges faced by SGBs among other things include the fact that principals are often reluctant to share their power and authority with the other SGB members. (Tsetetsi et al 2008). According to Bagarette (2011:227) many principals feel threatened because SGB parents have been given the responsibility to handle finances. The principals feel disempowered by the legislation. Onderi and Makori (2013) state that the principals influence the process and encourage participation from less challenging governors. The parents therefore depend on the principal who

uses his professional powers to influence the SGB. This leads to weak management of institutions.

In a similar study, Van Wyk (2007), contends that research done in other countries suggest that the principal is in charge and the governors have very little impact. The principal has a dominant role in meetings and decision making. The principal is more educated and receives first-hand information from the Department and also the principal must execute the decisions taken and this causes the parent governor to be ineffective. Bagarette (2012:101) sees the ineffectiveness of parent governors caused by the lack of understanding of their roles and functions. He further states that literacy levels and poor financial knowledge are the key contributing factors for the failure of the partnership between principals and parents.

Karlsson (2002:332) ascribes the reluctance of parents to challenge the principal on issues, as culminating from a poor understanding of their role, capacity deficit in the range of skills needed to perform their functions as governors and regular attendance of meetings. Mncube (2010), states that parents are more comfortable with private rather than with public involvement in their children's education. This view is corroborated by Van Wyk 2007 when he states that governors rely on the principal and the educators for leadership and guidance. Although there are numerous challenges in parental involvement, it is critical for parents to be involved in their children's schooling.

Chapter Two reviewed the literature on the role parents in financial management, both from Africa and abroad. Decentralisation is a challenge because policy stipulations are not transformed into practice. The literature reviewed explored the various facets of parental involvement focusing on the key themes that are foregrounded. Training and skills is one key factor that needs to be addressed by the governments to ease the burden of lack of empowerment from parent governors. The level of education of the parent governors is not sufficient to understand the language of the policy. The literature looks at the framework of National Quintiles and the Section 21 and Section 20 status. These two frameworks were chosen because although the Act theoretically provides spaces for democratic transformation; problems arise when the Act has to be transformed into practice.

Mncube (2007) previously reported on uncovering both covert and often explicit agendas by some teaching staff to deny parents from taking part in crucial decision-

making processes affecting the education of their children. Such actions continue to undermine and often disregard the authority endowed upon the parents in matters of school governance in South Africa.

The argument highlight that among other things these are the reasons why school governing bodies lack skills and competencies to manage finances: literacy of parent members, mistrust and conflict between parent governing body members and the principals, inadequate training of the governors and an adherence to autocratic management styles on the part of school principals. Most parent governors are not equipped for the responsibility involved in managing school finances and allow the principal and at high school the accountancy educator to carry out all the financial management and governance functions at the school. (Mestry and Naidoo 2008:120).

According to (Mestry 2004:128) prior to the Schools Act being promulgated every principal was considered as an accounting officer and was accountable to the Head of Department. In a case where the MEC suspended the principal in Mpumalanga for mismanaging funds, the court overruled the decision of the MEC to suspend the principal on the grounds that principals are accountable to the School governing body for the financial matter which are not specifically entrusted to him by the statute (SASA) and therefore the employer is not entitled to hold the principal liable for the school governing body's obligation.

According to Mestry (2004:127-129) to determine who is accountable for school finances, there was a great perception among many parents, teachers and principals that the principal is the accounting officer and therefore accountable to the Department of Education for school finances. Some indicated the finance committee while some indicated that the school governing body is responsible the school's finances. It was also evident that in some schools the principal and the school governing body did not work together in managing school finances. It was also revealed that the school governing body members are not sufficiently trained by the Department of Education to manage funds, while some principals indicated that training of governing body members on finance management is too theoretical.

The employer is entitled to hold the employee liable and accountable for the professional development of the school, but is not entitled to prescribe to employees

and hold them accountable for statutory functions vested in the school governing body relating to the assets, liabilities, property and the financial management of the school.

This raises an interesting debate as I see the SGB as some form of an external body governing the school. I refer to it as an external body because the governing body members especially the parent component are not directly involved with the operational matters and professional management at schools. The Act stipulates that the parent component of the governing body must be the majority. The Act is very clear however about the role of the parent governor in the governance of the school whilst clearly outlining the roles of principals and professional educators in the management of the affairs of a school.

Although the principal is accountable to the school governing body for financial management, however the case of Schonbee and the MEC (Bisschoff and Mestry, 2005:63) is an indication that the Act needs to be revisited, reworded or revised. If the department cannot hold principals accountable maybe the Act should make provision for principals to be accountable. The Act places a huge responsibility on parent governors, the questions however is, is this fair? I already stated elsewhere that I see the school governing body as an external body that is tasked with managing funds that are used by an internal body which is the principal and the educators.

Some of the challenges faced by governing bodies among other things include the fact that principals are often reluctant to share their power and authority with the other school governing body members, this view is also supported by (Tsotetsi et al 2008). Principals are viewed by governors as playing a positive role in SGBs. Governors referred to principals as 'the finger on the pulse of what is happening at school'; they are resource persons for other members of the SGBs and 'the engines' of the schools (Mncube 2009).

2.1.2.6 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the general challenges experienced by SGB's in carrying out their financial management function. It is evident that the role of the SGB is a challenge both internationally and locally as there are a lot of unanswered questions

around the functioning. In this study the focus is on the financial management function which among other things includes compilation of the budget, keeping financial records and auditing of books, school fund and asset management.

The next Chapter discusses methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods

Introduction

This chapter describes research design and methodology and the methods and sampling techniques that will be utilised to generate the data. The issues of trustworthiness and ethics conclude this Chapter together with the limitations of the study.

3.1 Paradigmatic debates

Three broad paradigms have been identified as offering competing opportunities for conceptualising the methodological choices in educational research. Paradigms provide sets of philosophical assumptions about the nature of knowledge (epistemology), reality (ontology) and values (axiology) that underpin human understanding and rationality (Hamersley 2012). The three are:

Positivism:

Positivists believe that the world can be reduced to immutable forms on the basis of scientifically derived evidence. The only knowledge considered to be authentic is that which is scientifically generated using mathematical and statistical models (Hamersley, 2012). Anything which does not operate in accordance with scientifically proven general laws of science and mathematics is looked at as mere conjecture or fairy tales. Such beliefs have become the basis of scientific experimentation, hypothesis testing and statistical modelling. The models provide for empirical methods which arrive at statistically reliable answer. The researcher has no business trying to interpret the data and make sense of it as there are already existing models which help in that process. My research does not fall into this framework as it is based on an attempt to understand how the actors people view issues around parental involvement in schools.

Critical realism

The third paradigm offers criticism against both these approaches. It is called Critical Realism. Critical realists fundamentally argue that the world of science and the social

world which positivism and interpretivism respectively emphasise do not exist in isolation from each other. There exists a dialectical relationship between the two. Science does not offer the finality of evidence but that its nature and purpose is to seek continual and often transforming nature of the phenomena of this world. Once upon a time, there was concrete evidence that the world was flat and square. This has been replaced by new laws of physics which show that the world is round.

The point about critical realism is that it the world can be understood from a set of three fundamental assumptions. The empirical provides us with evidence from that which can be observed. The actual refers to that which exists independent of the knower. And the real is that which drives action and response (Collier, 1994). The task of the researcher is to bring the potency of each of these domains into the interrogation of any phenomena. This has led to interpretations of the world as being understood via complementing approaches of structure and agency (Archer, 1996). The structure exists independent of the knower, but the agency can only be assumed to derive from our interpretation of the effects those structures have. Once again the study does not use this paradigm.

Interpretive paradigm

Those opposed to positivism argue that knowledge and truth do not exist separately from the 'knowers'. (Popper, 1963) In other words, people bring their own understanding to the phenomena of the world. In addition, understanding the world and its various phenomena cannot be attributed to science and mathematical modelling alone. People's perceptions, cultural and social upbringing and experience are important in the social construction of knowledge about the world. Two observers for example can come to a class and go away with totally different views about the quality of learning that was taking place. One who believes that a noisy class disrupts learning may not believe that the standard of learning in a noisy school can be high. On the other hand, another observer might value the importance of speech and dialogue in the learning process and will go away thinking that the quality of learning in the same class was high. Both these judgments hold some truth in them. The important thing is for the researcher to understand their own role and values as contributing to the interpretation and the ultimately to the knowledge that the research creates. Under interpretivism, truth can thus be subjective while it can only

be objective under positivism. I therefore position myself within the Interpretive paradigm and the details are discussed below.

3.1.1 Interpretive paradigm

This study's focus is on how principals, educators and parents view the parent governor world, in this case their role in managing finances at schools, and their relationship to this world Guba & Lincoln (1994). This places this study in the interpretive paradigm which is described by Cohen *et al.* (2011:26) as a "paradigm that strives to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors." They further state that "the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience" Cohen, *et al* (2011:21) where the focus is on attaching meanings and interpreting the data Cohen *et al.* (2011).

Guba and Lincoln (1994:106) capture the reasons for this choice of paradigm when they state that "human behaviour, unlike that of physical objects, can be understood without reference to the meanings and purposes attached by human actors to their activities." Creswell (2007:27) reinforces the choice of the interpretive paradigm when he states that "the researchers intent, then, is to make sense (interpret) the meanings others have about the world. This is why qualitative research is often called 'interpretive' research."

This study explores the phenomenon of parent governor role from the perspective of six principals, twelve educators, twelve FINCOM parents and thirty SGB parents and employs semi-structured interviews where the inquirer and the participant invariably influence one another in the research process Mertens (1998). Linked to this interaction is the methodology employed in the interpretive paradigm which speaks of observations, interviews and questionnaires as qualitative methods of data generation, with the latter two being employed in this study Mertens(1998). Lastly, Mertens (1998) claims that the correlative approach in interpretivist research leads to a multiplicity of views that advances a clearer understanding of the perceptions of the participants which are then contrasted and compared and which leads to a better understanding of the phenomenon under study.

3.2 Research design and methodology

3.2.1 Research design

Yin (2003:20) states that all empirically conducted research has a research design which he explains as “a logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions.” The data that is to be generated which eventually will lead to conclusions. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) further indicate that a research design sets out how the research is to be conducted, who the research participants are and the conditions under which the data will be generated.

As this study was concerned with parent governor experiences in managing finances, it would therefore follow that a qualitative case study design would be utilised. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:395) qualitative research “describes and analyses people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.”

A case study design was utilised for this research as it focused on a particular problem which in this case was the parent governor participation in financial matters. Rule & John (2011). According to Yin (2003) a case study design consists of four types namely single case (holistic), single case (embedded), multiple case (holistic) and multiple case (embedded). Yin (2003) explains that choosing a single case design is similar to conducting a single experiment either to test a theory; or when a case is unique in nature or when a case represents other cases; or when the case reveals data previously not accessible; or when repeating an investigation but in a different time frame. Yin (2003:42) refers to this type of single case study as holistic which he contrasts with an embedded single case study “when within a single case attention is also given to a subunit or subunits.” Rule and John (2011), however point out that the limitations of a single case study are that the conclusions cannot be applied to other cases; there can be no comparisons drawn and that researcher bias may be allowed to creep in if the researcher has previous knowledge of the case. It

was for the limitations offered above that I had chosen a multiple-case study design which involved six schools. According to Yin (2003) multiple-case design comes to exist when a particular study contains more than one case. He further explains that “a multiple-case study may consist of multiple holistic cases or of multiple embedded cases” Yin (2003:52). This study has the principal as a chief accounting officer and an ex officio member of the SGB, together with two teachers, two FINCOM parents and 5 SGB parents as well as documents review per school and there are six schools thus making it a multiple embedded case study design. Yin (2003) does however caution researchers that multiple-case design must show evidence of replication with the choice of case carefully chosen and that if results are contrary to the researchers study this must be clearly expressed at the beginning of the investigation.

In as much as case study design serves to advance qualitative research, there are a few downsides that the researcher should be aware of when utilising a case study design.

(Yin 2003) contends that the first concern of a case study research is that there is an absence of exactness in the findings. The second concern is that case studies cannot be generalised but (Yin 2003:10) does argue “that case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes (Yin 2003) This study addressed the various concerns raised in the preceding discussion by firstly ensuring that there was a semblance of exactness in the findings by utilising the principle of dependability where rigorous methodology to generate the findings will be adhered to (Rule & John 2011). Secondly, the concern of this study not being generalised to other studies is a non-issue as this study was concerned with the theoretical phenomenon of parent participation in finances and can only purport to add to the existing literature on parental involvement Yin (2003).

3.2.2 Sampling

Cohen, *et al.* (2011) explain that sampling is as a consequence of the entire population not being able to contribute to data generation in a particular research. They state that numerous aspects which result in sampling are time constraints, difficulty in accessing all the participants in a study and the expenses related to conducting a huge study with an entire population. Hence a researcher “often needs

to be able to obtain data from a small group or subset of the total population” and “this smaller group or subset is the sample” (Cohen, *et al.* 2011:100). They add that there are two types of sampling namely, probability sampling or random sampling and non-probability sampling or purposive sampling. Probability sampling seeks to make generalisations because of its large sample size while non-probability sampling does not claim to generalise because of its smaller sample size (Cohen, *et al.* 2011).

This is a case study of six secondary schools in the Western Cape: Cape Town area, Metro South District in Quintiles five, three and two.

This is a small scale study and therefore employed convenience/ purposive sampling which “involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents” and “as it does not represent any group apart from itself, it does not seek to generalise about the wider population” Cohen, *et al.* (2011:113-114). Further to this, sampling was done purposively which Rule and John (2011) explain is when the choice of participants is deliberate to enhance the research. The unit of analysis in this study was the parent governor role and thus includes six principals, twelve educators and 42 parents from all the schools to triangulate what the parents claim in their interviews. As a researcher, I am a school principal in the Western Cape and this position afforded me easy access to schools and the chosen high schools are schools of convenience as I work in this District. The comparison is fair because I compared schools in the same Quintiles and contextual socio- economic conditions but with different section 21 and Section 20 statuses.

Table 3.1 Research Instruments

METHOD	PARTICIPANTS	EVIDENCE NEEDED
Interview (Appendix 5)	School Principals (6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documents of financial matters (SGB Minutes, Finance Policy, FINCOM Minutes, Training Manual etc.). 2. Financial processes. 3. Perspectives on the role and capacity of parents in school finances.
Interview (Appendix 6)	Teachers (12) Two per school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal Information regarding school finances and involvement. 2. Understanding of financial processes at school. 3. Perspective on the role of parents. 4. Perspectives on the role of the principal.
Interview (Appendix 7)	FINCOM Parents (12) Two per school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background and the reasons for involvement. 2. Attitude towards financial management 3. Capacity issues (skills and training vs level of education). 4. Knowledge of responsibilities vs Participation 5. Understanding of financial processes. 6. Role performed. 7. Perspectives on the role of the principal.
Questionnaire (Appendix 8)	SGB Parents (30) 5 per school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of SASA stipulations and their role. 2. Attitude of parents

3.3 Data generation methods

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

This study was interested in principals, educators and the parents' own perspectives on their role as parent governors which made interviewing them on their experiences appropriate. Questionnaires were used to supplement data from the interviews because the researcher needed more information from other parents. Rule & John (2011). Yin (2003:89) claims that "one of the most important sources of case study information is the interview." de Vos (2005) agrees with this statement when he states that qualitative research has been dominated by interviews as a means of data generation. He further explains that there are two types of interviews in qualitative research namely unstructured and semi-structured interviews de Vos (2005). He elaborates that "unstructured interviews are conducted without utilising any of the researcher's prior information, experience or opinions in a particular area" de Vos, (2005:292). He contrasts this with semi-structured or guided interviews which he claims is appropriate for gathering in-depth data that can be examined for similarities and differences. de Vos (2005). He proceeds to state that "because all respondents have been asked the same questions, responses can be coded and tabulated, and descriptive statistics used to examine the data for relationships" de Vos (2005: 292). As this study was interested in one particular area of interest, parental participation and how it was perceived by the various participants in differing contexts, it was deemed prudent that semi-structured interviews would be the most appropriate instrument in generating data. de Vos (2005) explains that the researcher conducting semi-structured interviews needs to be armed with an interview schedule with questions that guide the interview schedule with questions that guide the interview process and ensures that the focus of the interview is not lost. Furthermore he states clearly that "questions should be neutral rather than value laden or leading. Jargon and ambiguous questions should be avoided in order to eliminate confusion and prejudice de Vos (2005: 297). He further explains that during the interview process itself, the researcher should ensure that the participant is comfortable and suggests that the researcher share the interview schedule with

the participant who can then choose in which order he/she wishes to answer the question. "The participant is thus allowed a strong role in determining how the interview proceeds" which helps to make the participant feel more comfortable and forthcoming in sharing intimate details of his/her experiences de Vos, (2005:297).

In order to triangulate data voices of other parents who are not on FINCOM were used to corroborate the FINCOM parents' claims on their roles in finances. Rule and John (2011:109) assert that "triangulation refers to the process of using multiple sources and methods to support propositions or findings in a case study." In addition they claim that the thinking behind triangulation is to reduce inaccuracies through the use of one source for data generation Rule & John (2011). They also claim that this would lead to the strengthening of the truthfulness of the findings but they juxtapose this with the claim that "including additional actors or seeking data from them via different methods, simply provides a greater breadth of perspectives but not a truer (more valid) perspective" Rule & John (2011: 109). Denzin and Lincoln (2005:5) add to our understanding of triangulation when they state that the use of "triangulation reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured." It would be apt therefore, to conclude by adding that the voices used in this study will add depth as well as richness to the study on the roles of parent governors in school financial management.

3.4 Data analysis

de Vos, (2005:338) explains that identifying a set number of themes can be problematic when the data is voluminous but advises that the data should be sorted out into small, workable themes de Vos (2005). Discourse analysis refers to the researcher making deductions not only from what is articulated by participants but also by how it is articulated Rule & John (2011). They explain that before content or thematic analysis can occur, coding of interview responses need to take place Rule & John (2011). This is strengthened by Cohen, et al. (2011:476) when they state that "content analysis involves coding, categorising, comparing and concluding – drawing theoretical conclusions from the text." Rule and John (2011) confirm that vacillating from codes to themes is frequently used in case studies and is referred to as content analysis. Maree (2007) describes content analysis as examining data from different perspectives that will assist the interpretation of raw data. Content

analysis was chosen as a method of analysing and interpreting data in this study because I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the different perspectives of parents in the role they perform.

Cohen, *et al.* (2011) pointedly state that there is no singular way or proper way for data to be analysed but adds that qualitative data should be guided by fitness of purpose. This involves the researcher making clear what he/she requires the data analysis to do Cohen, *et al.* (2001). They explain that in analysing qualitative data the researcher makes “sense of data in terms of participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities” Cohen, *et al.* (2011: 411). As this study is interested in the parent governor’ perspectives and experiences on their roles in finances, the analysis serves to define how they view their compliance to SASA stipulations. One of the hallmarks of case study research is “a rich and detailed description which focuses on specifics” which Rule and John (2011:87) refer to as ‘thick description’. Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) claim that not all events can be reduced to a simple interpretation thus ‘thick descriptions’ are preferred to representing complex conditions as simple situations. Rule and John (2011:87) add that ‘thick description’ “tries to capture a sense of actions and events as they occur in context, as well as participants’ understandings of these actions, using categories and concepts of the participants themselves.” These categories will emerge once the researcher codes and labels the data which consumes a lot of time and multiple readings Rule & John (2011). They also suggest that coding choices impact on the generation of findings, emergent conclusions, detailed explanations and theories and recommendations Rule & John (2011). They also add that “researchers prefer to do their own coding despite the labour intensive nature of the process. Coding also provides a good opportunity for getting close to the data” Rule & John (2011: 77). They further offer advice on the practicality of coding by suggesting that wide margins, and spaces between lines be utilised for the researcher to make notes and apply codes to the various parts of the text using highlighters of different colours to make the coding process that much more useful.

3.5 Ethical issues

Creswell (2007:44) claims that “throughout all phases of the research process we are sensitive to ethical considerations” because as researchers we are asking participants to expose intimate, personal thoughts about their life experiences and to

give off a lot of their personal time to our projects. Stake (2003) takes ethical considerations in case studies a step further when he states that as researchers we are morally obligated not to place participants in harm's way. It is for this reason that Rule and John (2011:112) therefore claim that "research ethics, which are developed and embraced by a community of scholars, govern and guide the practices of researchers." Hence it is now normal practice for institutions of higher learning that engage in research to fulfil ethical considerations Rule & John(2011). As a result I sought permission to conduct this research from Department of Education (DoE). Further to this, letters of permission to conduct research at the various schools were given to the school principals who act as gate-keepers of the research sites. Added to this, letters of permission were given to the research participants outlining the purpose of my study. This is linked to one of the first requirements of ethics which is autonomy and informed consent that Kvale and Brinkman (2009) claim involves briefing the participants about the reason for the study and its main characteristics, as well as any risk and remuneration from participants. Creswell (2007) adds to the principle of autonomy by stating that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any point. This study used pseudonyms for both the participants and schools.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Yin (2003) claims that the quality of a research design can be measured using tests that involve concepts such as trustworthiness, confirmability, dependability and credibility. Rule and John (2011: 107) offer a concise explanation of trustworthiness when they state that "the concept promotes values such as scholarly rigour, transparency and professional ethics in the interest of qualitative research gaining levels of trust and fidelity in the research community."

The principle of dependability refers to an attempt by the researcher to "focus on methodological rigour and coherence towards generating findings and case accounts which the research community can accept with confidence." Mertens (1998) elucidates the principle of dependability when she claims that the inquiry process be audited to check for levels of quality and how appropriate the inquiry process was. The last principle refers to confirmability which de Vos (2005) explains as when the findings of the research are confirmed by the data.

3.7 Limitations of the study

Mertens (1998) declares that it is impossible to “design and conduct the ‘perfect’ research study in education ...” and that it is for this reason that researchers identify and discuss the limits in their field of study. This is supported by de Vos (2005) when he states that however carefully planned the study is there is always potential for limitations in regards to data instruments, issues of generalisability and ethical issues. The study was located in six secondary schools only and therefore made generalisations difficult. A further limitation was time constraints in conducting the study. This would be the time available for participants to participate in the interviews.

3.8 Chapter summary

The preceding chapter gave an overview of the three research paradigms and firmly placed the research study in the interpretative paradigm and sought to explain the methodology employed to generate the data for the study. Added to this, the data generation instruments were clearly spelt out together with sampling issues. Further to this the method of data analysis was explained. The issue of ethics and trustworthiness, which is integral to research retaining its integrity, concluded this chapter. The following chapter will focus on data generation, findings and discussion.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussions of the data gathered at the six high schools in Metro South from National Quintiles 2, 3 and 5 and from six school principals, twelve teachers, twelve parents as well as thirty SGB parents who completed questionnaires. Presentation of data takes the form of themes that emerged through the content analysis of the interviews and questionnaires as discussed in the previous chapter. Further, in presenting the data, I wanted to ensure that the voices of the participants were not lost. To this end, *verbatim* quotations are used throughout the data presentation and discussion. Pertinent findings are then analysed and discussed. The summary results appear in Section 4.7.

The key questions were:

1. What role do parent governors play in school financial management?
2. How are financial processes done at school level and to what extent are parent governors involved in these processes?
3. What, if any, is the nature of the difference in parent governor involvement between a Section 21 and a non – Section 21 school within and across Quintiles?
4. Is parents' participation in school financial management related to their knowledge of their responsibilities?

Data presentation

The data is organised according to the three Quintiles and reports on the perspectives of parents, principals and educators on the role performed by parent governors in school finances at these schools.

The analysis is presented as follows:

4.1 National Quintile 5 (NQ5)

4.2 National Quintile 3 (NQ3) and

4.3 National Quintile 2 (NQ2)

Section 21 and Section 20 schools are compared in the following categories.

- The Finance Committee,
- Documents of financial matters; focusing on the Finance Policy, Basic Financial Manual, records and accessibility.
- Parental attitude towards financial management matters,
- Skills, Training and Understanding of financial processes and
- Perspectives on the role of the principal

A comparative analysis was used in this section. The principals, educators and parents' views were garnered using the same questions and data from the SGB parent questionnaire. These were used to triangulate the responses to support or against the interview responses. (See Appendix 4 for the instruments.)

4.1 National Quintile 5 Schools

Quintile 5 schools are those schools that are identified as schools located in what could be perceived as more affluent suburbs (DoE 2006). The general expectation is that such schools tend to do better than most schools in any other Quintiles and that there would be a noticeably strong focus on professionalism, integrity and financial practices that are sound, tried and tested and embedded in excellence in financial management policies and protocols.

4.1.1 School 5.20 (NQ5, Section 20)

This school is located in a township that has predominantly Afrikaans speaking learners. Some parents are working and some are unemployed. The school is generally neat and the building is old but well maintained. There are 26 educators, 820 learners and the school fees are R1400.

Principal

The acting principal is a coloured male who is close to retirement. He admitted that he knows very little about running a school and did not seem eager to be in this position. This principal has not previously served on the SGB and it is his first year of being involved in school governance matters. He has a post graduate qualification.

Educators

The two educators interviewed were in their fifties and have been at the school for more than a decade. Their qualifications are a Certificate and a Diploma respectively. Both educators have served on the SGB for one cycle and have not served on the SGB before.

Parents

The school identifies parents through class educators and encourages them to be nominated to serve on the SGB. The two parents who were interviewed were middle aged females. The FINCOM member has a Grade 8 qualification and has served on the SGB for two cycles. The second parent who is the Treasurer has a Grade 12 qualification, has been an SGB member for 3 cycles and is currently serving in the financial capacity as the treasurer for one year. This parent should then be experienced as an SGB member. 5 other parents who are SGB members completed the questionnaires.

4.1.2 The role of parents in school finances

The first section discusses the School's Finance committee and Finance Policy. These are the critical activities in managing a schools financial process effectively. Failure to comply with the above can be to the detriment of smooth financial processes at any school.

4.1.2.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

Surprisingly and contrary to the regulations, there is no FINCOM at this school. Although there is no FINCOM this did not seem to be of much interest to the parents. According to the educators the FINCOM matters are discussed with parents at the SGB meetings but that the parents do not display any interest at these meetings. On the other hand the principal is not part of FINCOM and he does not get invited by the parents and staff to discuss financial related processes at the school. None of the minutes were available for perusal and none of the participants could give a clear response in this regard. The matter remained unclear as the parents indicated that the educators should know why there are no FINCOM minutes and the principal and the

educators blamed the parents for lack of involvement. The failure to establish an effective Finance committee at this school was to the detriment of healthy financial processes and also had a negative impact and affected important financial aspects and financial documents that will be discussed below.

4.1.2.1 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.1.2.2.1 School Finance Policy

This section of the interviews began by asking the participants if the school had a Finance Policy, how it was made available to the stakeholders and whether parents understood the contents. The interviewed parents responded that they did not have a Finance Policy and could not comment on the policy design and implementation due to the non-existence of the policy. The same questions were asked of the educators and the principal. The first educator responded by stating that there is a draft financial policy in the drawer, while the other said there is one at his home and it was issued in a meeting. The principal concurred with the former educator and said,

‘There was a draft that was never finalised... somewhere in the drawer’.

He further stated that the policy was not made available to the stakeholders, but could not explain why this was the case. The principal and the SGB at this school are thus in violation of the requirement that every school should have a Finance Policy. They failed to finalise the Finance Policy document and this negatively affects financial processes at the school. There was no clear document guiding the financial processes at the school and no document informing financial practices and processes.

4.1.2.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

The participants were then asked if they had a copy of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Basic Financial Manual for Schools and how they utilised the handbook. As stated in Chapter Two, this is one of the most important documents that

stipulates how the SGB should administer school finances. Some of the parent responses were:

‘I do not have, may be somewhere in the office’
and ‘No I have never seen such a document’.

Similarly both educators agreed that they do not have and have not seen the Basic Financial Manual. Likewise the principal’s response to this question was uncertain as he uttered that,

‘No, [it] may be in the safe’.

From the above responses it is evident that at the school they have not seen the document and also never read it.

4.1.2.2.3 Access to Financial Records

Parents indicated they had no access to financial records while the principal and the educators suggested there was a lack of interest for financial involvement from the parents. The principal further stated that the parents do not ask for the financial documents and records. It appears that there are not financial records at the school. It seems there is a general misunderstanding and confusion about what is required as well as a lack of working together between staff and SGB parents due to conflicting ideas.

4.1.3. Attitudes towards Financial Management

According to the principal, parents are not willing to be involved in financial matters. Initially, in the current cycle four parents were nominated to serve on the SGB but two dropped out and the other two did not turn out at the scheduled SGB meetings. These meetings take place in the evenings and continue until late at night. This affects attendance at SGB meetings as it seems that the parents do not want to be out late at night. The two remaining parents were Muslims and could not attend late meetings during their holy month of Ramadan; these parents then disappeared from serving on the SGB during this period and never returned.

Interviewed parents stated that they support fundraising initiatives by donating and issuing cash to their own children and assisting with trips to raise funds and they seemed eager to perform this function. It seems that these parents only want to be involved at a personal level, assisting their own children.

A question was posed to the two parents who are FINCOM members if they thought parent governors should be involved in financial management and in their opinion, which duties should be performed by parents. These parents clearly expressed that they do not think that as parents they should be involved in school finances. Some of their responses were,

‘No I do not think so, the principal and the bursar should [do it]’ and

‘We do not have the time.’

This attitude was also seen in Chikoko’s research (2008:253) and Tsotetsi et al (2008:376). However, in responding to the same question, the educators said that parents were interested but it was an issue of a lack of skills. The principal then contradicted this view by stating that,

‘The parents are not interested and it is a struggle and an effort to get them to attend meetings’.

In order to triangulate data, 5 other SGB parent members were asked through questionnaires to determine their attitude towards financial management. By contrast, as Table 4.1.1 below shows, the SGB parents who were not FINCOM members said that it is ‘very important’ and ‘most important’ that parents be involved in school financial matters. 3 SGB Parents said it is *very important* that parents should be more involved in school finances while 2 felt it is *most important*. The same SGB parents were asked if parents should have any financial duties and all the SGB parents think that as parents they should have financial responsibilities and duties. 4/5 parents said fundraising should be driven by parents. This is in contradiction to the response of the FINCOM parents who have a more active role in finances.

Table 4.1.3(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4) (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	2	3	-	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	3	2	-	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	4	-	-	-

The table 4.1.3(b) below shows various reasons why parents think they should have the above responsibilities.

Table 4.1.3(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

1 To be more involved	3
2 To assist SGB parents to administer finances	-
3 Assist with fundraising	2

3/5 SGB parents indicated that parents should have financial duties to get more involved while the other two felt assisting with fundraising is pivotal. These responses suggest that may be the principal is not affording these parents an opportunity to get involved in finances even though they acknowledge the need for parents to have financial responsibilities at school.

4.1.4 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

The evidence suggests that parents at this school are not equipped to control and monitor the budget. The two interviewed parents did not receive any financial training and indicated that WCED should train them. When asked about their training needs, the parent who is the treasurer said that, the training should be on school finances as opposed to the general training on roles and responsibilities which they had received.

The other parent who is also a FINCOM member showed no interest and her response was,

‘I am not interested in that’...‘I want to be trained in First Aid, something I can use... No *maan*, parents must not do school finances’.

The FINCOM member parent questioned why they should be involved in school budgets and this displays a lack of interest. The principal affirmed the lack of interest by stating that all parents are involved at a basic level only. The educators have to perform the financial management task on behalf of parents. Consequently both educators on FINCOM specified the need for parents to be trained in basic financial skills.

The principal identified budgeting skills and translating policies into practice as a crucial skill needed by parents. An educator concurred with the principal and specified that the treasurer is incompetent. Parents indicated lack of experience in requisition, drawing up the budget and the general financial processes. A FINCOM member said that,

‘I do not know. I do not attend the meetings; I just see stuff being bought.’

The educators suggested that some parents are willing but not able, that may be with more training they can be but the 3yr cycle is not working. There is a lack of cohesion and specifically the principal displayed a lack of confidence in the treasurer to monitor and administer school finances.

‘The treasurer who is a parent is problematic, she was appointed without looking at the skills’.

This view from the principal was reinforced by one of the educators, who added that,

‘The treasurer is problematic and incapable and he does not have the skill and the internal quarrels indicate that there are issues that need clarity between the treasurer and the teaching staff’.

This educator said the teachers have to do the financial job on behalf of the treasurer. In response to the same question all 5 of the SGB parents also indicated that the principal and the teachers do the job on behalf of the parents because parents perceive them to be more knowledgeable.(See QD i).

This tension between the SGB members has been noted in other cases by scholars like Brown and Duku (2008:109).The educators and the parents do not agree and there are conflicting ideas about parental involvement in school finances.

Table 4.1.4(a) below illustrates the rating of the SGB parents of their ability to perform SASA stipulations. These parents have mostly poor to average knowledge of the work that they are expected to do as parent governors. However 4 parents indicated ability to apply for exemptions.

Table 4.1.4(a): Ability to perform Financial Duties and processes (Q B1-9) (n=5).

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund	-	-	4	1	-
Open and maintain a banking account	-	3	1	1	-
Keep the financial records of the school	-	1	4	-	-
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	-	3	2	-	-
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	-	1	4	-	-
Buy text books and educational material for the school	-	1	3	1	-
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED	-	-	5	-	-
Ensure that school fees are collected	-	1	4	-	-
Application for exemptions from school fees	-	1	-	4	-

As Table 4.1.4(b) below shows 4/5 SGB parents indicated that they attended training in the last year. However when asked (in Section D b-f) they all indicated that although they had attended training, they did not learn anything new and need more training in finances.

Table 4.1.4(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	4	1
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	5	-
Computer Training	-	-
Fundraising	-	-
None	-	-

4.1.5 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

The principal has a minimal role in school finances; he is described by one of the educators as someone who just sits in the meeting and listens to the discussions. There is not much influence this principal has on the SGB and this view was confirmed by him as he stated that,

‘Parents seem to have their own agendas, I am only acting and I do not worry that much as I am aware that parents question every move made by the educators and there is no interest in financial responsibility other than policing income and expenditure’.

The lack of involvement by the principal has serious consequences as he is supposed to be the accounting officer and a key facilitator in managing the school finances. This principal neglects his duties of guiding the SGB. He further stated that the SGB parents and the SGB educators of the school are directly involved with the financial processes as they handle all financial matters. The parents seemed reluctant to comment on the principal’s role and one simply said,

‘I can’t remember...’

This attitude of being reluctant to share information and challenge the principal is noted by Karlsson (2002:332). All interviewed participants said that the previous principal managed finances alone and that the current acting principal does not have sufficient information and experience to manage school finances. The financial management processes at this school are therefore not according to the expectations of the WCED guidelines and policies which means that the school is not compliant. When asked about his involvement in school finances, he indicated that although he is the chief accounting officer he has very little involvement. The principal does not sign cheques and also does not play an active role in managing funds at this school.

4.1.6 School 5.20: Summary and Conclusion

This section discussed School 5.20 (NQ5 Section 20). It is evident that at this school, very little is done by the principal to ensure that there is a functional Finance Policy to determine how finances are administered. The Basic Financial Manual issued by the Department of Basic Education to guide SGBs is not available at the school. The SGB at this school is not afforded an opportunity by the principal and the SMT to use the Basic Financial Manual. There is no FINCOM and consequently there is not much effort to enable the parents to see the key role of the FINCOM and the importance of this committee. Therefore the school's financial processes are negatively affected by this. The FINCOM parents showed no interest in getting involved and complying with SASA stipulations. By contrast the other SGB parents showed willingness, but it seems that willing ones are not able and the able ones are not willing. The indication was that interviewed parents would rather prefer to be involved at a personal level and only support their own children financially by paying for fundraising activities. This private interest is confirmed by (Mncube 2010) who contends that parents are comfortable with private rather than public involvement in education. The parents lack basic financial management skills to perform their allocated functions.

4.1.7 School 5.21 (NQ 5, Section 21)

This is a Section 21 school meaning that the school manages their own financial allocations and purchases goods directly from the suppliers without ordering via the WCED. This school is located in an area that is a border between a working class community that has suburbs and an area that is characterised by informal settlements and low cost houses with unemployment at the core of this area. This school draws

learners from both sides. The school has 31 WCED educators or state paid educators, 4 SGB or school governing body paid educators and 1013 learners. The fees are R2200 per annum. Parents are a combination of professionals, labourers and unemployed. There is a general challenge with regards to getting parents to pay the required school fees

Principal

The principal is a coloured male over fifty years. He seems to understand basic financial procedures. This principal has been at the school for almost two decades and served on the SGB for more than fifteen years and in a financial capacity for more than six years before he became a school principal. He has a Post Graduate qualification.

Educators

Two educators were interviewed: the female educator is over fifty, has been at the school for less than five years and served on the SGB and in a financial capacity for one cycle. Her qualification is a Certificate. The male educator is almost fifty, has been at the school for two decades, served on the SGB for three cycles and has been serving in a financial capacity for more than six years. This educator has an academic degree.

Parents

The two interviewed parents were females over forty: one is self-employed, has a grade 11 certificate and is the treasurer of the SGB. She has served on the SGB for three cycles and has currently served in a financial capacity for three years. The second parent is a general worker, has a Grade Nine certificate and served on the SGB for two cycles and in a financial capacity for four years. The school identifies parents, approaches and encourages them to be nominated to serve on the SGB.

4.1.8 Role of parents in school finances

The participants' responses are detailed according to the themes stated elsewhere previously.

4.1.8.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

The Finance committee at this school is not fully functional and it does not operate regularly. There are no regular FINCOM meetings and financial related issues are discussed during SGB meetings. There are SGB meeting minutes but no separate FINCOM minutes. The principal stated that parents are only interested in income and expenditure and the educators and the principal have to do the job and take decisions and inform the parents at SGB level. Parents indicated that they get informed about FINCOM issues at the meetings and they do not mind as they feel that the principal and the educators should do the financial management job. Financial decisions are then taken at SGB meetings.

4.1.8.2 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.1.8.2.1 School Finance Policy

Responding to whether the school has a Finance Policy, varying but interesting responses emerged at this school. The principal indicated that the school does have a Finance Policy designed by the finance officer and sanctioned by the SGB and that the policy was issued to the parents during an SGB meeting. The principal further stated that the policy is not rigid; they are flexible when implementing it and that the parents do not understand the complex terminology in the policy. In response to the same question, one educator mentioned that there is a policy in the file and it is available on request while the other educator stated that,

'A policy is a very sensitive issue and the school chooses not to show the parents in order not to discourage them from paying school fees and think the school has funds'.

Interviewed parents mentioned that they have not seen a Finance Policy and have not heard about it. From the above statement as the educator suggests, the parents are not given the required information as the school fears misinterpretation of the documents. This view is supported by Chikoko (2008:367) as he states that parents are marginalised in decision making. The SGB parents, likewise had not seen the policy.

4.1.8.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

According to the principal, the school has a WCED Basic Financial Manual that is used to inform financial processes at the school. The educators concurred with the principal and stated that they only use the Manual when the need arises but it is not shown to the parents because the educators design guidelines based on the Manual and inform the parents at the SGB meetings. Both parents claimed that they have not seen the Manual and therefore the principal has not made this a priority as the Departments expects.

4.1.8.2.3 Access to Financial Records

Educators at this school stated that the Finance Policy and records are on file and available on request and the principal agreed with them and further stated that the parents do not ask for the policy documents. These documents are used for compliance and the parents do not really understand the complex language. The parents confirmed that they have not seen nor asked for any documents. The WCED Basic Manual is contextualised and used for guidelines and the parents do not really get to see or talk about it. Financial records are available on request at the office.

4.1.9 Attitudes towards Financial Management

When asked to comment on the attitude of parents to financial management, the principal suggested that parents participate at a lower level due to a lack of skills and that they largely leave the responsibility to the school educators and the principal. The educators indicated that parents only assist with fundraising at an operational level and that the parents do not really follow the Act requirements in terms of their duties. In response to the same question, the parents had contradicting views. One parent said

that they should be involved and also be shown how to perform these duties to get an understanding of what is going on while the other disagreed and said that,

‘I do not think this financial responsibility should be made the parent’s problem at all’.

According to the parents, their financial involvement entails attending meetings to support fundraising and also paying some fundraising money when required. Table 4.2.1 below illustrates their responses.

In order to triangulate data, 5 other SGB parent members were asked through questionnaires to determine their attitude towards financial management. These SGB parents feel that it is very important that parents should be involved in school finances. They also stress the importance of parents to attend FINCOM meetings and also strongly feel that parents should take a leading role in fundraising.

The same SGB parents were asked if parents should have any financial duties 3/5 of the SGB parents think that as parents they should have financial responsibilities and duties.

Table 4.1.9(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4) (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	-	3	2	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	-	2	3	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	1	3	-	-

Table 4.1.9(b) below illustrates reasons for parental involvement in finances at this school.

Table 4.1.9(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

Parents' reasons for financial duties	
1 To be more involved	3
2 To assist SGB parents to administer finances	1
3 Assist with fundraising	1

3 SGB parents indicated that parents should have financial duties to get more involved while the other one felt assisting with fundraising is pivotal and the other felt that parents should get involved to help administer the finances better. In general, there is an overwhelming sense of disenfranchisement on the part of parent governors within this particular category, fuelled by feelings of discontent with the financial management practices of the school, but also with the principal in particular. The parent governor component does have the desire to be more involved, but the relegation of their role to a function viewed as insignificant and trivialised by members of the school staff, including the principal, means that parents feel disempowered and incapacitated to execute their function with any sense of recognition or pride. On a positive side though, the parent governors do not abscond their involvement and are quite eager to learn and participate.

4.1.10 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

When asked how parents make financial decisions at this school, the principal responded that, in most cases they are informed but they do not make any decisions. These parents do not contribute to the budget process but only debate whether to raise the fees or not. The principal further stated that, the parents are very active but not effective in fundraising. He stated that finding the right item to market is usually the challenge. This view was corroborated by one educator, who stated that,

‘Parents try but are not really effective, the teachers and the principal still have to play a pivotal role in fundraising’.

The principal further said that the parent's availability, the skills and expertise is usually an issue. This principal felt that the training provided by the Department was not useful as it indicates responsibilities but not how to go about it. The educators felt that the financial concepts are one of the key challenges facing the parents. One educator stated that,

'Half the time the parents do not understand what we discuss, we have to explain the concepts'.

The above quote confirms Baffour (2006) in his research where he suggested that parents do not understand the language of the policy. An educator stated that one parent could monitor the budget but she does not have time due to her private commitments. The parents felt that they need training on basics on budgeting and financial skills. The WCED is responsible for the training and needs to focus on financial monitoring, budgeting and requisition which are skills specific to the task. These parents also felt that they are not adequately equipped to perform the expected financial duties and therefore there is a sense of urgency to acquire the financial skills.

The Table 4.1.10(a) below indicates that the SGB parents at this school have poor to average ability to perform the financial responsibilities. This confirms that these parents are not capacitated to execute the financial management function.

Table 4.1.10(a): Ability to perform Financial Duties and processes (Q B1-9) (n=5)

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund		2	3		
Open and maintain a banking account	1	3	1		
Keep the financial records of the school	1	2	2		
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	1	2	2		
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	2	2	1		
Buy text books and educational material for the school		3	2		
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED		2	3		
Ensure that school fees are collected	1	2	2		
Application for exemptions from school fees		3	2		

Table 4.1.10(b) below illustrates that 3/5 SGB parents indicated that they attended training in the previous year. All SGB Parents indicated that they attended training but they did not learn anything new. Three indicated a need for financial training, and one needed computer training while none indicated a need to be developed in fundraising skills.

Table 4.1.10(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	3	2
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	3	-
Computer Training	1	-
Fundraising	-	-
None	1	-

The parents indicated that they did not learn anything new, according to them training was mainly on roles and responsibilities and did not zoom into any particular task as required, for instance they would have appreciated an intensive session on financial management specifically.

4.1.11 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

This principal is heavily and actively involved in school finances, acts as a chief accounting officer, and among other things his duties entail signing cheques, giving guidance to parent and educator component, and the general management of all financial processes. The parents said that they get informed by the principal on what to do with regards to financial processes although they do not play a leading role. The educators allude to this by stating that the principal plays an active role, he chairs

FINCOM within an SGB meeting as well as scheduled SGB meetings and questions financial processes as needed.

4.1.12 School 5.20: Summary and conclusion

The principal at this school plays a major role in managing school finances. Besides being a key agent for all financial processes, he chairs FINCOM and SGB meetings, a job which should be done by the treasurer and the SGB chairperson respectively. These are similar findings to those of Mncube (2009) and Adams & Waghid (2005) that there is a tendency to rely on the principal due to lack of skills and knowledge and there is a challenge of not adhering to the Finance Policy as the practical implementation is not what is stated, policy is contextualised and is not followed exactly as it is written.

The teaching staff and the principal seem to be directing all financial processes while limiting the SGB parents on the amount of knowledge to be at their disposal. Parents at this school are informed about financial decisions and this is explained by the teachers and the principal as due to lack of effectiveness shown by the parents. There is an acknowledgement of a sense of determination from the parents to acquire financial skills.

4.2 Quintile 3 Schools

The next section discusses Quintile 3 schools. Like the Quintile 5 schools, the following two schools are also classified according to Section 20 and Section 21 status. Quintile 3 schools are expected to be less wealthy than Quintile 5 schools and therefore one would expect the Quintile 5 schools to be better than Quintile 3 schools in terms of management, parental participation and involvement in finances. The geographical location and area where these schools are located depicts higher poverty levels as opposed to Quintile 5 areas.

4.2.1 School 3.20 (NQ5, Section 20)

The school is located in an area that has IsiXhosa speaking learners. The parents range from professionals, domestic workers, administrators and most of them are unemployed. The school building is neat and well maintained. There are 33 WCED educators and 1100 learners who do not have to pay fees as this is a no fee school.

Principal

This principal is a black male; he is in his early forties and has a post graduate qualification. He has been a principal for less than 5 years. Before he was appointed as a principal, he served on the SGB in a financial capacity for 3- cycles and therefore should be experienced in financial matters. Although he is currently serving on the SGB in his capacity as a financial chief accounting officer for only 3 years, his extensive experience in school finances seems to count in his favour as it is explained below. This is evident in the manner that financial processes are done at his school.

Educators

Both interviewed educators are females; one is almost forty, has a degree while the other is over fifty and her qualification is a teaching diploma. Both educators have been teaching at the school for more than a decade. The older one has served on the SGB for two cycles and in a financial capacity for two years while the younger one has an experience of only one SGB cycle and currently in a financial capacity for one year.

Parents

Of the two parents who were interviewed one is over forty and the other is over fifty. The older one is a female and currently the treasurer of the SGB with no financial background. She has served on the SGB for one cycle and in a financial capacity for two years. She has a grade 11 qualification and her nomination to serve on the SGB was due to her active involvement in the community. The second parent is a middle aged male, is in the second year of his first SGB cycle and is currently serving in financial capacity for two years. He has a grade 10 certificate. 5 other SGB parent governors completed questionnaires.

4.2.2 The role of parents in school finances

As previously state the participants' responses are detailed according to themes.

4.2.2.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

According to the principal and the rest of the parents there is an active FINCOM at this school. The two parents and educators serving on FINCOM get an update about financial processes from the bursar and the principal who perform the financial function. The principal stated that,

‘FINCOM gives the report to the treasurer who is a parent and the two parents meet with the bursar and I, we show them books to verify and look at them.’

The school's budget also gets prepared by FINCOM and gets presented to the parents.

The parent who is a treasurer corroborated this view by stating that,

‘I am a FINCOM member but I do not attend financial meetings, the teachers meet and give us the information.’

The second parent who is the chairperson also agreed that the principal and management with the FINCOM educators give the financial report to the parents.

Minutes were also available at the school.

4.2.2.2 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.2.2.2.1 School Finance Policy

The school has a Finance Policy, and the principal stated that,

‘Yes I found it when I started and we reviewed it in 2011 with all stakeholders concerned. The RCL took it to the learners, teachers took it to the teachers and the SGB parents took it to the rest of the parents and it was adopted and accepted unanimously then communicated to the rest of the school community.’

This view was confirmed by the educators who agreed that the policy was reviewed and accepted by all stake holders. Similarly both parents stated that the policy does exist and it was issued to them at the SGB meeting. One FINCOM parent stated that,

‘We nominated two parents to sit with management and FINCOM and reviewed the policy.’

From the above it was clear that there was synergy between the three groups of participants. The principal further stated that the policy was given to the parents but they did not understand the policy language due to literacy levels. This is in line with the research of Baffour (2006). The principal also said that this becomes a sensitive issue as the parents do not want the educators to see that they do not understand the policy. I saw the Finance Policy and it is in place and guides financial processes at this school.

4.2.2.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

The principal indicated that FINCOM makes use of the WCED Basic Financial Manual for Schools and it is available on request. Little interest has been shown in asking for it. The two educators said that the principal has the Manual and he refers to it when the need arises. Both admitted to not requesting the Manual for perusal. Neither of the parents nor the educators knew much about the Manual and stated that they rely on the principal for any financial related information as they do not always have the time to read the Manual. The reliance on the principal for financial decisions are corroborated by Chikoko (2008:260) as he suggests that financial decisions are made mostly by school heads due to lack of empowerment of the parents and because it is not practical for them to be actively involved in finances.

4.2.2.2.3 Access to Financial Records

The principal and the educators stated that the Finance Policy and records are available on request however the educators and the parents do not ask for it. Minutes of FINCOM meetings are discussed with parents and they accept these without any verification. Parents stated that they trust the information that the principal issues and explains.

4.2.3. Attitudes towards Financial Management

The principal portrayed that parents do not have a positive attitude towards financial management. He stated that,

‘They see it as another burden, they do not know how to manage finances.’

The above view was confirmed by an educator who said that parents see the financial duty at school as an added burden and it is very difficult to find a willing parent. The second educator stated that parents are positive but have a challenge of not being able to perform the role. The two interviewed FINCOM parents, the treasurer and the chairperson in response to their feelings about financial involvement respectively gave contrasting responses and said,

‘It helps to tell us what is happening at school, the law says teacher, parent and learner. I need to know about spending issues and what happens to school fund.’(Treasurer)

And

‘Actually it does not really matter as this is too much work for us; we should not be doing these duties.’ (Other FINCOM parent)

The two responses show that these parents do not see eye to eye as one strongly feels parents should be involved while the other sees it as an extra responsibility. The second parent’s line of thought supports the work of Chikoko 2008:253) where he states that parents shoulder many responsibilities in their homes and some have work commitments as well as literacy low levels to understand the complex language of financial processes. The table below shows the attitudes of parents towards financial management.

Table 4.2.3(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4) (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	5	-	-	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	1	4	-	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	2	1	-	1

5 of the SGB parents who completed questionnaires felt that it was most important that parents should perform financial duties. Likewise 4/5 of these parents felt that it is very important for parents to attend FINCOM meetings. The issue of fundraising had various responses 4 of parents expressed the importance at different levels while only 1 felt it was least important for parents to drive fundraising at school.

Table 4.2.3(b) below shows reasons for parents to be involved in finances. 3 parents indicated that parents should be involved in financial duties to get more involved while two felt that parents should be involved to help administer the finances. None of the parents who completed questionnaire wanted to be involved to assist with fundraising although they all acknowledged the importance of parents in driving fundraising (Table 4.2.3(a)) This could mean that the principal and the educators parents are comfortable with performing the financial function on the parents' behalf and do not necessarily encourage the parents to be more involved.

Table 4.2.3(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

1 To be more involved	3
2 To assist SGB parents to administer finances	2
3 Assist with fundraising	-

4.2.4 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

The two interviewed parents both attended training by WCED. The parent who is a treasurer said that,

‘The training was on roles and responsibilities and I learnt a lot, However the term is almost up; in future the WCED should train SGB members earlier. We can try to implement the skills but the educators do all the work and give us the report.’

The other FINCOM parent stated that she did not learn much from the training. She learnt budgeting skills and still finds difficulty in performing this financial function without depending on the educators. The principal suggested that parents are not equipped to perform the expected financial responsibility. He added that the SGB members were trained towards the end of their cycle and this is not worth it as the school has to elect new SGB representatives. He said that budgeting skills and fundraising still remained the key critical areas that parents were lacking. The same sentiments were shared by both educators who stated that parents needed training as they were not competent. The educators concluded that in the end, the principal and the educators have to perform this function on behalf of the parents. The above lack of support for parent governors to perform their expected role is seen elsewhere in Tsotetsi et al (2008:386) as he contends that enough widespread support is not given to parent governors.

In order to gain more insight, other SGB members had to complete questionnaires to ascertain their ability to perform the financial duties. Table 4.2.4(a) below illustrates their responses.

Table 4.2.4(a): Ability to Perform Financial Duties and Processes (Q B1-9) (n=5).

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund	4	1	-	-	-
Open and maintain a banking account	-	2	3	-	-
Keep the financial records of the school	3	2	-	-	-
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	3	2	-	-	-
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	3	2	-	-	-
Buy text books and educational material for the school	3	2	-	-	-
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED	3	2	-	-	-
Ensure that school fees are collected	3	1	1	-	-
Application for exemptions from school fees	3	2	-	-	-

In response to the ability to do the above SASA stipulations and financial duties, the SGB parents at this school indicated very poor to poor understanding and ability to perform the financial processes. 3 parents are able to open and maintain a bank account and only one is able to ensure that fees are collected. The above confirms what the principal and the educators stated that parents at this school are not competent to perform the expected financial duties. Parents are not playing their full role as mandated by SASA (Mncube 2009). These parents are not competent in their financial management function due to a lack of specific training.

Similarly, Table 4.3.4 below shows that 3 out of 5 SGB parents attended training. All of them did not learn anything new, and all of them equally indicated that they need further training in financial management as the table below indicates.

Table 4.2.4(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	2	3
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	5	-
Computer Training	-	-
Fundraising	-	-
None	-	-

4.2.5 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

This principal, among other financial duties has a role of monitoring and guiding, acting as a chief accounting officer, signing cheques, communicating policy procedures and ensuring implementation and compliance by the other SGB members. The principal plays facilitation and guiding role as well as monitoring. This was confirmed by both of the educators, one stated that the principal works with the financial officer and takes decisions and only consults when necessary. She added that if it is budgeted for, he goes for it and gives direction. The parents agreed with the educators that the principal gives direction and facilitates the financial management processes.

4.2.6 School 3.20: Summary and conclusion

The above section discussed school 3.20 (Quintile 3 Section 20). The principal plays a guiding role and works very closely with his SGB parents and FINCOM. The FINCOM seems to be active and operational while giving financial reports to the parents at the SGB meetings. Parents do not attend FINCOM meetings. Of the two parents on FINCOM, the one who is a treasurer is willing and able while the other sees this as an extra unwanted responsibility. The school has a functional Finance Policy that is well acknowledged by all the participants. The parents lack the required financial skills to perform the financial duties however the treasurer seems to be clued up. She is the

only parent who indicated that she learnt a lot in the training while the rest of the parents indicated that they did not learn anything new and have very poor understanding of the financial duties.

The next section discusses School 3.21 Quintile 3 Section 21. The section will conclude by a comparison between these two schools in Quintile 3.

4.2.7 School 3.21 (NQ5, Section 21)

This school is located in an area that is surrounded by informal settlements and Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses. Learners are predominantly IsiXhosa speaking and the area is mainly characterised by a high rate of unemployment and poverty. Some parents are domestic workers but according to the principal the majority is unemployed. The school has 33 WCED educators and 1120 learners and is also a no fee school. The school is generally neat with very limited playground and parking facilities.

Principal

The principal at this school is black male in his late forties, have been at the school for more than a decade and is a principal for less than 5 years. He has a post graduate qualification. He had no experience of serving on SGB in a financial capacity until he became a principal and serves as the chief accounting officer.

Educators

A male educator in his late thirties and a female educator in her late twenties were interviewed. The male educator has been at the school for more than a decade, is serving on the SGB for the first time in the first cycle and is also in his first year in a financial capacity. His qualification is a National Teaching Diploma. The second educator has been at the school for less than 5 years, is in her first cycle and also in her first year in a financial capacity. Her qualification is a degree.

Parents

The two parents that were interviewed were male and female; the male is in his late thirties and the female her early thirties. The female parent is serving in her first SGB cycle and in the second year in a financial capacity and the male parent is in his second SGB cycle and in his second year in a financial capacity. Both parents have grade 8-9 qualifications. For more insight and views on the role parents perform in finances, 5 other parents who are SGB members completed questionnaires. The next section discusses the role the parents perform in finances at this school.

4.2.8 The role of parents in school finances

As stated previously the participants' responses are detailed according to themes.

4.2.8.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

The school has a FINCOM that takes care of all the financial processes; the committee is heavily dependent on educators as the principal and educators state that the treasurer who is a parent is not interested due to a lack of skills. The FINCOM parents said that they get informed about FINCOM matters at the SGB meetings and they do not mind as the teachers perform this role on behalf of the parents. The educators confirmed this view and the parents stated that they when they get briefed about FINCOM matters in the meetings they do not necessarily get any documents to verify the information. Parents willingly accept what the educators and the principal presents and disempower themselves; their role is almost non-existent.

4.2.8.2 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.2.8.2.1 School Finance Policy

The principal indicated that the school has a financial policy that was designed by the SMT members who were studying an ACE course in School Leadership. According to this principal, this policy was done as an assignment and the educators presented it to parents and learners and the policy was approved and he indicated that the policy is available to the stakeholders on request. The educators agreed with the principal. However both parents stated that they have not seen the policy document. This could mean that these parents never requested the policy although they were told about its

availability. The educators thus work through the policy to perform financial processes at this school with very little involvement from the parents.

4.2.8.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

The principal stated that the school has a copy of the WCED Basic Financial Manual; he added that they used it when the policy was designed. This Manual is available on request. However neither the parents nor the educators have shown any interest in requesting this document and both were not sure about the Manual and its importance.

4.2.8.2.3 Access to Financial Records

Parents get informed about FINCOM matters at SGB meetings and they accept the financial report without verifying using any documents. The principal and the educators admitted to having the policy on file and available on request however the parents do not ask for it. The principal also said that the WCED Basic Financial Manual and other financial records are available on request but educators and the parents do not ask for them.

4.2.9 Attitudes towards Financial Management

In response to the attitude of parents in financial management the principal said that,

‘The parents do not have an interest, the level of debate and the skill is an issue.’

The educators also indicated that parents display very little interest. However the parents have very different responses. One parent stated that,

‘I do not think parents should get involved, as they may think that the money can do anything. The paper budget can mislead and parents might not want to pay telling themselves that the school has money. If the child needs a calculator, the parent might not buy and question, why must they buy a calculator when the school has so much funds.’

The second parent stated that parents should be part of school finances as parents should be informed about finances, this parent strongly felt that if there is any spending at school then as parents they should know about it. This indicates that parents can in fact be actively involved should they be empowered and given the necessary guidance to execute the expected duties.

The table below illustrates the attitude of the other SGB parents who are not part of FINCOM in finances.

All these parents felt that it is most important that SGB parents should be involved in finances and equally felt that parents should attend FINCOM meetings. Driving fundraising had varying responses although 4/5 of the respondents stressed the importance of parents in driving fundraising while only one felt that it was least important for parents to drive fundraising.

Table 4.2.9(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4) (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	5	-	-	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	5	-	-	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	2	1	-	1

Table 4.2.9(b) below shows various reasons given by the SGB parents for parents to have financial duties.

Two parents stated that parents should do financial duties to get more involved and two indicated to assist with fundraising and only one stated parents should be involved to help administer finances. Clearly the parents are not discouraged by the lack of skills; there is a strong sense of willingness to be involved. Maybe with the necessary guidance these parents may be active and effective in financial management at this school.

Table 4.2.9(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

1 To be more involved	2
2 To assist SGB parents to administer finances	1
3 Assist with fundraising	2

4.2.10 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

According to the principal, the parents lack skills and their level of education is a great concern. He further stated that the parents are not actively involved as the principal and the educators have to take a leading role in financial management. The educators felt that the WCED should train the SGB parents; they stated that the emphasis should be on norms and standards, terms and conditions of serving on the SGB and handling finances, computer and communication skills and financial management in general. The principal concurred saying:

‘I do not think the parents are equipped to perform the stipulated role, although they were trained on roles and responsibilities, they should get more training on finances.’

The interviewed parents also corroborated the principal and educators and said that they do not have the required confidence to handle finances without depending on the educators for guidance. Among other things, they mentioned that they need training on fundraising, budgeting and requisition.

As Table 4.2.10(a) shows the SGB parents have a limited ability of performing financial duties with only three instances when there is an average response. Both the interviewed and the SGB parents agree that they lack skills to be actively involved in financial management at this school

Table 4.2.10(a): Ability to perform Financial Duties and processes (Q B1-9) (n=5).

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund	1	3	1	-	-
Open and maintain a banking account	1	4	-	-	-
Keep the financial records of the school	2	3	-	-	-

Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	3	2	-	-	-
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	1	3	1	-	-
Buy text books and educational material for the school	1	4	-	-	-
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED	2	2	1	-	-
Ensure that school fees are collected	4	1	-	-	-
Application for exemptions from school fees	4	1	-	-	-

The Table 4.2.10(b) below indicates that 4/5 parents attended the SGB training on roles and responsibilities but did not learn anything new. Two parents stated that they need training on fundraising, two on computer skills while one parent said she does not need any training because she should not be doing that job.

Table 4.2.10(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	4	1
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	-	-
Computer Training	2	-
Fundraising	2	-
None	1	-

4.2.11 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

The principal describes his role as giving guidance on the SGB related information and policy matters so that the SGB can perform their role and execute functions. His duties entail signing cheques, monitoring and guiding in all financial processes. The educators agreed with the principal by saying that, he plays a huge role, controls all funds, approves requisition and sign cheques, suggests ideas for fundraising and monitors. Parents stated that the principal plays a key role in directing the finances at the school.

4.2.12 School 3.21: Summary and conclusion

This section discussed school 3.21 (NQ3 Section 21). The principal and the educators take a leading role in all financial matters; the school has a Finance Policy that was communicated to all stakeholders although the interviewed parents denied seeing the policy. The WCED Financial Manual is available according to the principal although both the educators and the parents were not sure about the existence of this document. Parents do not play an active role as they are heavily reliant on the educators. Parents do have an interest of getting involved however have very poor understanding and ability to perform financial processes. The next section discusses commonalities and differences between the two schools in quintile 3.

4.3 Quintile 2 Schools

The following section discusses Quintile Two schools. These schools are also classified according to Section 21 and Section 20 statuses. Quintile 2 schools are expected to be much poorer than Quintile 3 and 5 schools and parents are expected to have less involvement in school finances. These schools serve socio- economically challenged areas and they are no fee paying schools. The schools rely on the Norms and Standards provided by WCED as the schools do not always have the funds.

4.3.1 School 2.20 (NQ2, Section 20)

This is a no fee school situated in an area that has mainly IsiXhosa speaking learners. The school is surrounded by informal settlements and low income houses. This school looks neat and the building is well maintained although there are frequent reports of vandalism. Parents are a combination of very few professionals; (educators to be specific), general and domestic workers and the rest of the parents are unemployed. There are 41 WCED educators and 1369 learners.

Principal

The principal is a black male in his mid-forties with a post graduate qualification. He has been at the school for twenty years and a principal for the past 7 years. This principal is quite knowledgeable about the financial processes and policies and constantly keeps abreast with current educational issues and policies. Before he became a principal, he served on the SGB and FINCOM in a financial capacity.

Educators

The educators studied are both females over fifty years, they have been at the school for almost two decades and one has a certificate and the other a post graduate qualification. Both educators should have an extensive SGB experience as they have been serving on the SGB for three cycles and in a financial capacity for two cycles.

Parents

The two interviewed parents are a male and a female. The female is over fifty, works as an invigilator of the matric examinations and her qualification is a matric certificate. She has been serving on the SGB for 3 cycles and in a financial capacity for 6 years. She is currently the secretary of the SGB. The male parent is in his late thirties, works as a driver and also has a matric certificate. He has been serving on the SGB for one cycle and is presently in his 3rd year of the cycle as the treasurer.

4.3.2 The role of parents in school finances

As previously stated the participants' responses are detailed according to themes.

4.3.2.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

The FINCOM is fully constituted at School 5 according to Departmental requirements and chaired by the treasurer who is a parent. The bursar keeps the FINCOM meeting minutes and they are made available during SGB meetings. According to the principal, these minutes are usually read at the meeting when the educators on FINCOM have a hidden motion to discuss as there are conflicting ideas within the members of the SGB. This confuses the parents and they prefer not to be involved in these financial processes. In response to the availability of FINCOM minutes the two educators contradicted each other and said that,

‘Yes minutes are distributed and discussed in a meeting situation’.

and ‘No, they are not made available, we are supposed to meet on Wednesdays but the treasurer who is a parent works and cannot attend the meeting.’

The parent agreed with the first educator and contradicted the latter by saying that,

‘During the meetings the treasurer works with the secretary and signs petty cash, she is aware of what she signs for as she is not allowed to sign blank cheques.’

From the above responses it is quite evident that the one educator who is contradicting the other participants may have unresolved issues and may be the cause of the conflict in the SGB to which the principal alluded.

4.3.2.2 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.3.2.2.1 School Finance Policy

According to the principal, the school has a Finance Policy that was designed by FINCOM and approved by the relevant stake holders. This view was corroborated by the parents and one educator. The educators again gave contradicting responses, one admitted to having a Finance Policy while the other said they do not have a policy. The other FINCOM educator who denied that there is a policy said that the principal does everything. One could deduce that there is a conflict between this educator and the principal. A copy of the policy was available for verification. Both parents agreed to having discussed the policy in the meeting and copies were distributed accordingly. The principal further stated that they follow the policy but not fully due to contextual factors, parents have a challenge of understanding policy language although training was provided by the school.

4.3.2.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

WCED Basic Financial Manual is available at the school and referred to as a guideline when reviewing policy however the principal indicated that the SGB is not interested in the document and they do not ask for it. Both parents were quite aware of the WCED Basic Financial Manual, one exclaimed that,

‘Yes I do know it, the big blue file that the principal showed us We refer to it when we want to know something as all processes are explained.

SGB parents were not sure about the Manual and the educators said that it is available on request.

4.3.2.2.3 Access to Financial Records

The principal stated that the financial documents are available on request but no one asks for them. The parent corroborated with the principal by saying that,

‘The SGB members have access to all financial documents; if any SGB member is not clear he or she can access the document through the principal. All reports are discussed and all members have a right to view these documents anytime... FINCOM also gives report to the SGB and all other parents have a right to discuss with the principal after school.’

The educators concurred with the principal and the SGB parents.

4.3.3. Attitudes towards Financial Management

The principal states that the parents are reluctant to take a leading role in finances at this school due to internal dynamics and conflicts. Both educators specified that the parents are eager however they do not understand the technical language of the policy. Parents felt it is crucial for them to be part of school finances as this does not only empower them but can also protect the principal against accusations of fraud and embezzlement.

Table 4.3.3(a) shows the attitudes of SGB parents towards the financial management function. SGB parents felt that it is fundamental for parents to be involved in finances, be part of FINCOM and drive fundraising. The responses below indicate that although these parents do not perform the role, they in fact do see the importance of being involved. This response is in line with the educators comments that parents are in fact eager to be part of the financial management and that a lack of skill hinders their participation.

Table 4.3.3(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4 (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	2	3	-	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	3	2	-	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	4	-	-	-

As the Table 4.3.3(b) below portrays, parents want to be involved and be part of fundraising. This notion of the necessity to be part of financial management is consistent in all the parents studied at this school

Table 4.3.3(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

1= To be more involved	3
2=To assist SGB parents to administer finances	-
3 = Assist with fundraising	2

4.3.4 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

The principal said that the SGB parents rely on the budget prepared by the principal and the educators and accept it as it is. They do not add any input and they are only interested in income and expenditure. These parents have a challenge with lack of skills and the level of education. The treasurer said that she cannot do any work on her own as she depends on the principal. One parent said that the bank should also do the training as the Department is not good enough. The fundraising and budgeting skills are still critical and need to be acquired by the parents. The educators emphasised that parents need to be taught how to read financial documents and also the training period needs to be lengthened. Interviewed parents felt that they are not equipped to handle his responsibility although they would love to. Table 4.3.4(a) shows that the SGB parents have a poor a range of abilities to perform financial duties. This therefore emphasises the lack of skill to be actively involved in finances at this school.

Table 4.3.4(a): Ability to perform Financial Duties and processes (Q B1-9) (n=5).

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund	2	2	-	1	-
Open and maintain a banking account	2	-	-	2	1
Keep the financial records of the school	2	-	2	1	-
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	2	2	-	-	1
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	2	2	-	1	-
Buy text books and educational material for the school	2	1	-	2	-
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED	2	1	1	1	-

Ensure that school fees are collected	2	1	1	1	-
Application for exemptions from school fees	2	2	1	-	-

As indicated in the Table 4.3.4(b) below, 4/5 of the SGB parents attended training and did not learn anything new and all the parents indicated a need to be trained in financial management.

Table 4.3.4(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	4	1
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	5	-
Computer Training	-	-
Fundraising	-	-
None	-	-

4.3.5 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

The principal sees himself as a chief accounting officer, among other duties, his role is signing cheques, monitoring, guiding, controlling, monitoring budget and taking decisions on procurement with FINCOM. This was confirmed by the educators and the parents.

4.3.6 School 5: Summary and conclusion

The above section discussed School 2.20 (Section 20) in NQ2. The principal takes a leading and active role in directing financial processes. The financial documents are in place and available on request to the stakeholders. FINCOM is active and the educators and the principal drive the process. The parents are quite eager to be part of financial management however they lack the required skills to do so.

The next section discusses School 2.21 NQ2 Section 21, and the section will conclude by stating commonalities and differences between the two 2 schools.

4.3.7 School 6 (NQ2, Section 21)

Like school 2.20 this is also a no fee school situated in an area that has mainly IsiXhosa speaking learners. The school is surrounded by informal settlements and low income houses. This school's building looks well maintained with renovations taking place. Parents are a range of very few professionals, administrators, general and domestic workers and also unemployed. There are 24 WCED educators and 820 learners.

Principal

The principal is a black male over fifty, has been a principal for almost twenty years. He has experience in financial management prior to becoming a principal he served on the SGB in a financial capacity as a treasurer. He has a Post Graduate qualification

Educators

The two educators interviewed are a male and a female. The male educator is in his late forties, has been at the school for almost twenty years. This educator has been an SGB member for three cycles and in a financial capacity for six years and has an academic degree. The female educator is almost forty, have been at the school for fifteen years and it is her first cycle to serve on the SGB. She also has an academic degree.

Parents

The two interviewed parents are both females, one is in her forties and has a matric qualification. She has served on the SGB for one cycle and in a financial capacity for one year. The other is in her thirties, has a grade nine qualifications served on the SGB for one cycle and in a financial capacity for two years. Parents are nominated and voted to serve on the SGB through an open and democratic system.

4.3.8 The role of parents in school finances

As previously stated the participants' responses are detailed according to themes.

4.3.8.1 Finance Committee (FINCOM)

According to the principal, the parents are not active on FINCOM. They listen to what the educators have to say and rely on that information. The principal and the educators take a leading role. Educators said that FINCOM parents would love to be involved but there is no time. These parents also displayed an interest but they do not get the opportunity to get involved. The treasurer works and hardly avails herself to the FINCOM meetings. Most decisions are taken by the principal and the educators and the parents get informed.

4.3.8.2 Documents of Financial Matters:

4.3.8.2.1 School Finance Policy

When asked whether the school has a Finance Policy, the principal responded that there is a draft designed by the finance officer for a project however the other educators have issues with the draft policy and it was never finalised. The educators agreed that the draft was distributed by the principal and the financial officer. The educators said they understood the draft but the parents did not, their context makes it difficult to follow the policy, and there is a need for the parents to learn the language of the policy. The FINCOM parents had different views in this regard; one remembered getting a copy and the other parent said that,

‘I am not sure; I think we got it from the school as SGB’.

These parents have no interest and do not see the importance of the Finance Policy document. They are heavily reliant on what the principal and the educator have to say and do. This is a matter of lack of interest more than a lack of skills.

4.3.8.2.2 WCED Basic Financial Manual

The principal said they have the WCED Basic Financial Manual in the office and it is available on request. However the educators said they are not sure and the parents also have not seen the Manual. One parents said she saw the Manual at a previous school where she served on the SGB. The SGB parents were not aware of the Manual.

4.3.8.2.3 Access to Financial Records

The principal indicated that financial documents are available on request but the parents do not bother to ask, in most cases they get to see them in meetings and do not engage or show any interest. The educators corroborated the above view. The financial records, minutes and draft policy and the Manual are available on request however the principal said that the parents and the educators do not request these documents from the office.

4.3.9 Attitudes towards Financial Management

The principal indicated that the parents need the skills and the right attitude. The FINCOM parents had opposing views, one displayed willingness and felt that the parents should be part of the financial processes and said that,

‘It is right parents must know what is going on at school, the matter should be handled by the SGB parents then taken to the rest of the parent body.’

The other parent displayed a lack of willingness to serve and said that,

‘I think parents should not be involved in finances, too much discussions and one gets into trouble. People have a problem and accuse the teachers and the principal of embezzlement; I suggest the teachers should perform this role because they talk too much. There is just too much conflict.’

Educators said that the parents do not have a positive attitude and do not understand the process. The principal stated that parents need basic skills and willingness to understand the policy.

From the above, one clearly sees that this is a disappointed parent that initially was eager to assist but due to internal conflict is no longer interested. Clearly there are a number of reasons why the parents are not carrying out the allocated financial management responsibility. The school and all the others have no initiative to ensure compliance by the parents. It could be that with an extra push and an opportunity to engage these parents they would then be able to perform as they get an opportunity to be empowered. The SGB parents see the importance of parental involvement as Table 4.3.9(a) shows.

Table 4.3.9(a): Attitudes of the SGB parents towards Financial Management (Q C1 appendix 4) (n=5).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT					
	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important
Parents should be involved in school finances	2	3	-	-	-
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings	3	2	-	-	-
Fundraising should be driven by parents	1	4	-	-	-

Table 4.3.9(b) below shows that parents want to be involved and assist with fundraising.

Table 4.3.9(b): Reasons for financial involvement (Q C1b) (n=5).

1= To be more involved	3
2=To assist SGB parents to administer finances	-
3 = Assist with fundraising	2

4.3.10 Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

The principal describes the parents as enthusiastic, but they do not know much about finances. He stated that they do not understand the technical language of the policy. The principal and the educators said that the parents are not empowered to carry out the role they are expected to do. The principal further stated that the training was conducted in English and the parents did not grasp the content. Financial management and budgeting skills remain at the crux of what the parents need to be able to carry their duties as expected. The educators felt that besides acquiring financial management skills, parents need to learn how to read financial documents. The principal concluded that it is a challenge to get knowledgeable parents to serve on the SGB.

Table 4.3.10(a) below shows that the SGB parents have a poor to average ability to understand financial processes and undertake SASA stipulations.

Table 4.3.10(a): Ability to perform Financial Duties and processes (Q B1-9) (n=5).

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
To start and administer a school fund	4	1	-	-	-
Open and maintain a banking account	-	2	3	-	-
Keep the financial records of the school	3	2	-	-	-
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval	3	2	-	-	-
Draw up and submit annual statements to the WCED	3	2	-	-	-
Buy text books and educational material for the school	3	2	-	-	-
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED	3	2	-	-	-
Ensure that school fees are collected	3	1	1	-	-
Application for exemptions from school fees	3	2	-	-	-

Of the SGB parents 4/5 attended training and all of them did not learn anything new and all 5 said that they need training in financial management. These parents acknowledge that there is a lack of skill in this regard.

Table 4.3.10(b): Training (QD b,e,f) (n=5).

	Yes	No
In the last year did you attend any training?	4	1
Reasons why the training was not useful:		
Not learned anything new	5	-
Training was not relevant	-	-
What kind of training do you need to be equipped to do the work you are expected to do?		
Further financial training	5	-
Computer Training	-	-
Fundraising	-	-
None	-	-

4.3.11 Perspectives on the Role of the Principal

The principal sees his role as that of monitoring, guiding and assisting when needed in all aspects of financial management. He also evaluates, minimise waste and monitor resources and stock control. The educators agreed with the principal and the parents said he signs cheques, facilitates all financial related processes and guides them. The parents concurred with the principal.

4.3.12 School 2.21: Summary and conclusion

The principal and the educators take a leading and facilitation role in all aspects of financial management. The parents are passive and accept what is stated without questioning it. The school has a draft financial policy that was not finalised and the WCED Basic Financial Manual is available on request although it never got to be requested. Parents are lacking the necessary skills to perform the financial management duties.

4.4 Conclusion

Chapter 4 presented and analysed Data from the participants. Data was categorised according to the 6 schools per Quintile. The next chapter discusses and illustrates the key themes across the six schools from the perspectives of the participants. The patterns that are beginning to emerge will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Summary of Key themes

Introduction

This chapter discusses and illustrates the key themes across the six schools from the perspectives of the participants.

5.1 FINCOM

Table 5.1 below illustrates views of the participants regarding FINCOM

Table 5.1. :FINCOM Summary (n=50)

FINCOM						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No FINCOM	SGB FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM	SGB FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM
FINCOM PARENTS	No evidence of FINCOM meetings recorded.	FINCOM incorporated into SGB meetings and the educators and the principal take a leading role.	There is an active FINCOM at the school. The bursar and the educators take a leading role as the parents do not attend the FINCOM meetings.	Parents get informed about FINCOM matters at SGB meetings. Parents do not get any documents to verify the information relayed to them.	Fully constituted FINCOM that is chaired by a parent treasurer.	Parents are interested but there are no meetings arranged to attend at school.

FINCOM						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No FINCOM	SGB FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM	SGB FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM	ACTIVE FINCOM
SGB PARENTS	No FINCOM and no indication about the meetings taking place.	Parents are informed at SGB meetings about FINCOM related issues.	FINCOM matters are handled by the educators and the bursar.	Parents willingly accept what the educators and the principal say and this disempower themselves.	Parents work with the bursar to sign cheques.	Parents have to be part of finances to be well informed. The opportunities to do this not always there.
EDUCATORS	No FINCOM The principal says he is only acting and do not have an interest.	FINCOM incorporated into SGB meetings.	FINCOM matters are handled by the educators and the bursar.	The school has a FINCOM that is heavily reliant on educators.	Contradicting views, one agrees to meetings taking place while the other says meetings do not materialise due to a working parent treasurer.	The principal and the educators take a leading role.

PRINCIPAL	No FINCOM The principal is not interested and he does not initiate any meetings in this regard.	FINCOM incorporated into SGB meetings.	Active FINCOM and matters are handled by the educators and the bursar.	The school has a FINCOM that is heavily reliant on educators, parent treasurer not interested due to lack of skills.	Educators on FINCOM only read minutes when they have hidden motives. Conflicting ideas tend to emerge between SGB members and this confuses the parents.	Parents are not active, they listen to what the teachers say and rely on that.
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The NQ5 schools were expected to be more compliant than the NQ3 and NQ2 contrary to these expectations the NQ3 and the NQ 2 schools seem to be more compliant. Both NQ2 schools and NQ3 3.20 have an active FINCOM while the NQ5 5.21 and the NQ3 3.21 have their FINCOM incorporated into SGB meetings. This contradicts the expected norm that FINCOM should be a separate committee to the SGB. The NQ5 5.20 school is non-compliant and there is no evidence of FINCOM meetings taking place. It is evident that schools rely on educators and parents to chair FINCOM related matters and the parents are more inclined to accept what they get without questioning it.

5.2. Finance policy

Table 5.2 below gives an indication of the views of participants regarding the Finance Policy documents.

Table 5.2.: Finance Policy Summary (n=50)

FINANCE POLICY						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No Policy	Policy available	Policy available	Policy available	Policy available	Draft policy
FINCOM PARENTS	Policy non-existent.	Have not seen nor heard about the policy.	Policy available sanctioned and reviewed by all stakeholders	Have not seen the policy document.	Both parents agreed to having seen the policy and discussed it in a meeting situation.	Contradicting views, one remembered the policy issued as the draft while the other was not sure.
SGB PARENTS	Policy non-existent.	Have not seen the policy.	Policy available sanctioned and reviewed by all stakeholders	Educators work through the policy to perform financial processes with very little involvement from the parents.	Agreed there is a policy.	Did not see the policy.
EDUCATORS	Policy non-existent, draft not finalised	School has a policy on file, available on request	Policy available sanctioned and reviewed by all stakeholders	There is a Finance Policy that was designed by SMT members as an assignment, presented to educators and the learners for approval.	These educators gave contradicting responses; one stated there is a policy while the other said there is no policy.	There is a draft that was not finalised; parents did not understand the language of the draft as only educators did

FINANCE POLICY						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No Policy	Policy available	Policy available	Policy available	Policy available	Draft policy
PRINCIPAL	Policy non-existent, draft not finalised	School has a policy designed by financial officer and sanctioned by SGB.	Policy available sanctioned and reviewed by all stakeholders. Parents did not understand the language of the policy.	There is a Finance Policy that was designed by SMT members as an assignment , presented to educators and the learners for approval.	Finance Policy designed by FINCOM and approved by the various stakeholders.	A draft that was never finalised exists, designed by a finance officer for a project.

Four schools have the policy document, Schools 5.21, 3.20, 3.21 and 2.20. School 2.21 has a draft policy while 5.20 has no policy at all. Although the four schools have the policy the parents at School 5.21 and 3.21 have not seen the policy document. School 2.21 has a draft and most parents have not seen the policy, surprisingly only one FINCOM parent knew about the draft. At all schools educators seemed to be more aware about the policy than the parents. Only at School 2.20 there is a contradiction between the FINCOM educators about the existence of the policy. Seemingly the section 20 schools are more compliant than the section 21 schools.

5.3 WCED Basic Financial Manual

Table 5.3 shows responses to usage of the WCED Basic Financial Manual at the schools

Table 5.3.: Basic Financial Manual Summary (n=50)

BASIC FINANCIAL MANAUAL						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOL S	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No Manual	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed
FINCOM PARENTS	No evidence of the Manual	Not seen the Manual at all.	Parents did not know about the Manual and said they rely on the principal.	Not sure about the Manual and its existence.	Both parents were aware about the Manual and its existence.	Only one parent saw the Manual at the previous school where she served on the SGB.
SGB PARENTS	Have not seen the Manual	Not seen the Manual at all.	Do not know about the Manual.	Not sure about the Manual and its existence.	These parents were not sure about the Manual.	Did not know about the Manual
EDUCATORS	Have not seen the Manual	There is a Manual but not shown to parents as it is used as a guideline when necessary	The principal has the Manual and it is available on request. He also uses it when the need arises.	Not sure about the Manual and its existence.	The educators agreed that the Manual is in the office available on request although no one really asked for it.	Educators were not sure about the Manual and its existence.

BASIC FINANCIAL MANUAL						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No Manual	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed	Manual filed
PRINCIPAL	Was not sure about the Manual.	School has WCED Manual used to inform financial processes	FINCOM uses it and it is available on request.	There is a Manual and it was used to design the policy. Available on request.	Available and used as a guideline during policy review. No interest shown by parents to it.	The Manual is available on request

All the schools except School-5.20 have the WCED Basic Financial Manual filed and available on request. However none of the schools have shown the parents the Manual, only one parent at school 2.21 seemed to have seen the Manual at a previous school where she served on the SGB. Principals appeared to be the only participants knowledgeable about the Manual but there is no evidence of encouraging either the parents or the educators to read and familiarise themselves with the contents of the Manual.

5.4 Access to financial records

Table 5.4 below gives an overview of the access to financial records at the schools.

Table 5.4.: Access To Financial Records Summary (n=50)

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RECORDS						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No records	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested
FINCOM PARENTS	Parents have no access to records and no interest is shown in them.	Records available on request but they have not requested	Documents are available at the office however the parents and the educators do not ask for any financial documents	Parents and the educators do not ask for any financial documents.	Parents agreed that the documents are available on request and all reports are discussed and members at liberty to view and question any time.	All parties agreed that the financial documents are available on request.
SGB PARENTS	No access to financial records	Records available on request but they have not requested.	All parties agreed that the financial documents are available on request.	Parents and the educators do not ask for any financial documents.	SGB Parents were not sure about accessing the documents stated.	All parties agreed that the financial documents are available on request.

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RECORDS						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No records	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested	Not requested
EDUCATORS	No access to financial records	Records available on request but parents have not requested	All parties agreed that the financial documents are available on request.	Parents and the educators do not ask for any financial documents.	The educators agreed with the principal that the documents are available but no one really asks for them.	When any financial records are issued in a meeting the parents do not show any interest.
PRINCIPAL	There is no access to financial records and parents do not show any interest.	Records available on request but parents have not requested	All parties agreed that the financial documents are available on request.	Parents get informed about FINCOM at SGB meetings and accept financial report without asking for documents.	Financial documents are available on request but no one asks for them.	Records in the office and available though no one bothered to ask.

Evidence suggests that financial records are available at the schools however no interest is shown by the educators or the parents to access these documents. School 5.20 is the only school that has no access to financial records; it was not clear whether the records exist as the participants had no idea about the records or their existence. It

is evident that the schools have not done much to stimulate an interest or encourage the parents to access these records, there is no evidence of initiatives to encourage parents to request and engage with the documents.

5.5 Parents' attitude towards financial management

Table 5.5 shows parental attitudes towards Financial Management.

Table 5.5. :Parents' Attitude Towards Financial Management Summary (n=50)

PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	Negative	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive
FINCOM PARENTS	Do not want to be involved	Contradicting views, one is willing and the other is not.	Contradicting views, one is willing and the other is not.	Contradicting views, one is willing and the other is not.	Felt it is important for them to be part of financial management at the school.	These parents displayed opposing views in terms of the willingness.
SGB PARENTS	Showed willingness and said it's important for parents to be involved in financial matters.	Showed willingness and said it's important for parents to be involved in financial matters.	The SGB parents felt that it is important for parents to be involved in school financial matters.	These parents feel it is most important that parents get involved in fundraising and attend the FINCOM meetings.	SGB Parents indicated that it's important for parents to be involved in finances at school.	Parents should be involved in school finances.
PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT						

	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	Negative	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive	Mostly Positive
EDUCATORS	Parents are interested but have no skills.	Parents only assist with fund raising at operational level	Parents see their role as an added burden and they do not have the skill.	Parents display very little interest.	Parents eager but fail to understand the technical language of the policy.	Parents do not have a positive attitude due to lack of understanding the processes involved.
PRINCIPAL	Parents are not willing to be involved in financial matters.	Parents participate at a lower level due to a lack of skill.	Parents do not have a positive attitude towards financial management	Parents do not have an interest, level of debate and the skill is the key impediment.	Parents reluctant to take a leading role due to internal dynamics.	Parents need the basic skills to interpret policy.

FINCOM parents at schools 5.20 display a lack of interest. However at schools 5.21, 3.30, 3.21 and 2.21 parents aired contradicting views. All SGB members were willing to be involved in finances and display a positive attitude. These parents equally professed the importance of parental involvement in finances. The educators and the principal however view the parental attitude in a different way, a range of responses emerged. Most parents have a positive attitude but the required skill hinders their effectiveness, this will be discussed in Chapter 5.

5.6 Skills Training and Understanding of Financial Processes

The Table 5.6 below displays the parental understanding of Skills, Training and Understanding of Financial processes.

Table 5.6.: Skills Training and Understanding of Financial Processes Summary (n=50)

Skills Training and Understanding of Financial Processes						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training
FINCOM PARENTS	One needs financial training while the other is not interested.	Need training on basic financial skills such as budgeting.	Parents do not have a chance to implement the skill from the training as educators do all the work, need to be trained earlier in the cycle.	Do not have the required confidence to handle finances, admit that they need financial training especially.	Parents acknowledged a lack of skills on their side and further stated their dependence on the educators in this regard.	There is a great need to deepen the training and simplify the language of the policy.
SGB PARENTS	Average ability and then indicated a need further financial training.	Poor to average ability and need training on basic financial skills.	Very poor ability to perform and need training on further financial training.	Poor ability to perform the allocated function.	Parents have a range of abilities. They are at different levels of understanding.	Parents stressed the importance of acquiring the fin man skill. They have very poor to poor understanding of the finances.
EDUCATORS	The parents need basic financial skills	Parents try but not effective and lack understanding of financial concepts, educators perform the role.	Parents need training as they are not competent, heavily reliant on educators.	WCED should train parents focusing on finances; parents lack the skill to be effective.	Parents need to be taught how to read financial documents and the training period must be lengthened.	Besides learning the skill parents need to learn the language of the policy.

Skills Training and Understanding of Financial Processes						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training	Need training
PRINCIPAL	Parents need skill in budgeting and translating policies.	Parents are active but not effective, lack the financial management skills, and availability of time is an issue.	Parents budgeting and fundraising skills lacking, parents lack the skill and trained at the end of cycle.	Parents lack the skill and the level of education is a concern. Focus of training should be on finances not roles.	Parents are only interested in income and expenditure; depend on the budget prepared by the educators.	Parents are enthusiastic however do not know much about financial management.

All parents acknowledged that they need training on basic financial management. There is a huge tendency to depend on the principal and the educators as all schools have disempowered the parents by not allowing them to take a leading role in financial management. Training seemed to be ineffective as the parents did not learn anything new at the training. It also appeared inappropriate as it focussed more on roles and responsibilities other than zooming into specifics about financial management.

5.7 Perspective on the role of the principal

The Table 5.7 below illustrates the perspectives on the role of the principal to show his financial management responsibilities.

Table 5.7.: Perspectives On The Role Of The Principal Summary (n=50)

PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No role	Leading role	Active role	Key role	Leading role	Active role
FINCOM PARENTS	Parents reluctant to share information about the principal's role.	Do not play a leading role, depend on the principal for information and they trust him.	All parties agreed that the principal plays an active role and gives direction in all financial processes.	Principal plays a key role in directing the finances at the school.	The principal is the accounting officer, guides, monitors and assist the SGB.	The principal informs them about the processes.
SGB PARENTS	No comment on the principal's role, this was a rather a sensitive topic.	Do not play a leading role, depend on the principal for information and they trust him.	All parties agreed that the principal plays an active role.	Principal plays a facilitating role in directing the finances at the school.	The principal supports the SGB	These parents see the principal as the key agent in running the financial processes at the school.
EDUCATORS	Minimal role, no initiative displayed.	Plays a leading and facilitating role.	All parties agreed that the principal plays an active role.	Principal controls all funds and monitors.	The principal is the chief accounting officer.	Educators acknowledged the guiding and facilitation role of the principal.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL						
	NQ5		NQ3		NQ2	
SCHOOLS	5. 20	5. 21	3. 20	3. 21	2. 20	2. 21
	No role	Leading role	Active role	Key role	Leading role	Active role
PRINCIPAL	SGB parents and the educators are directly involved with finances; he displays a lack of interest.	Plays a leading and facilitating role. Actively involved and gives direction.	The principal monitors, guides and acts as a chief financial officer.	Describes his role as a monitoring one and giving guidance on policy issues as well as directing all financial activities.	He sees himself as the accounting officer, monitors, guides the process accordingly.	Principal has a guiding, monitoring and assisting role in all financial aspects.

Besides the School 5.20 principal who has a minimal role in finances, all other school principals are chief accounting officers. They take a leading, guiding and facilitation role. This has created dependency from the educators and especially the parents. Seemingly the principals have not fully released the financial management role to the parents. It could be that be a lack of trust between the principal and the parents needs to be explored.

5.8 Summary and conclusion

The above chapter dealt with key emerging themes in the parent governor role in financial management at the schools studied. Their responses were varied. Some principals and educators indicated that a lack of skill is the key challenge. The majority of parents seem to have a promising attitude towards their allocated role while schools on the contrary seem to disempower them.

On the whole then, schools within these Quintiles do not perform according to general expectations some differences have emerged. What is evident in the findings is that there is no consensus among schools in terms of parent governors. Some emphasis is placed on the value of the parent governor's role but there is no clear indication what is prioritised, whether it is their roles and responsibilities or their competency and abilities. Less attention is focused on empowering them and giving them an opportunity to prove themselves.

The next concluding chapter summarises the study and discusses the patterns that developed from the key themes.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter conclusions are drawn from the detailed analysis and data presented in Chapter 5 linked to the key research questions. The implications of the study for additional research are then put forward.

6.1 The Nature of Parental Governors participation

As its key research aim, this study sought to explore the role of parent members of the SGB in their schools. It also sought to elicit the school principals' role in enabling the parents to perform this role. Although the principal is the chief accounting officer, the SGB is primarily accountable to manage finances. The findings suggest that this is not the case at these schools. The parents do not take a leading role in school finances in fact in most cases they get informed and depend on the educators and the principal.

The parental role is insignificant as the ability to perform SASA stipulations is rather poor. The contribution of this study shows that, the lack of skills appears to be foregrounded as the primary cause of the ineffectiveness among the SGB members. Contrary to this, schools are unknowingly or knowingly limiting the SGB parents from playing an active and effective role in school finances by not empowering them. While the findings suggest that parents do not have the skills required, interestingly their attitudes towards the allocated role come out positively in most cases. The question then becomes, if these parents have a positive attitude why can't they be empowered by being trained appropriately?

Certain factors such as infrequent meetings and FINCOM that is not properly functional, failure of the schools to initiate training to empower the parent governors hinder the effectiveness of these parents. As much as all principals and educators foreground a lack of skills and generally accept that parents cannot perform their role, very little is done by all schools across quintiles to empower parents. No one is willing to break the cycle of the dependency on the educators. The sense of ownership and the responsibility to train the parents is not prioritised and all schools depend on WCED to train members.

However this training is largely ineffective and the study confirms the work of Bush and Heystek (2005) that infrequent short and haphazard presentations by ill equipped service providers hinder the effective training of governors. None of the SGB parents found the training useful as they did not learn anything new from the training. The training focused on the general roles and responsibilities rather than the specific stipulations like in this case financial management. The country needs to reach a stage where the training serves what it is intended for; training is not effective at this stage.

6.2 The impact of Quintile, Section 21 and Section 20 status

As stated elsewhere in chapter one, NQ 5 schools were perceived to be better governed than NQ3 and NQ2 schools, likewise Section 21 schools are expected to be better managed financially than Section 20 schools. The key expectations were that NQ5 schools are expected to be more compliant and better managed than NQ3 & NQ2 and parents are expected to be a better quality and more involved and knowledgeable. Contrary to this, we find that NQ3 and NQ2 parents are much more aware of their roles and involved. In terms of decision making, there was little difference as at all the schools educators and the principal exclude the parents from making crucial decisions. This corroborates the research of Mncube (2007). School 5.20 is in the highest quintile and yet the most non-compliant in all respects throughout the study. Schools in the lower quintiles appear to be better governed and managed. This dismisses the assumptions that higher quintiles are better managed and section 21 Schools are more effective in financial management.

6.3 Summary and Conclusion

Overall this suggests that as indicated in chapter one (Sections 1.9.2 and 1.9.3) that the classifications for both NQ's and Sections are poor predictors of performance and that these may require revision.

6.4 Conclusion

The role of the principal in empowering SGB parents, the gaps around the content of SGB training as well as a great need to redefine the role of parents at school is at the crux of the topics that need to be deepened when defining the future of education in our country. The questions for further research are: Are school principals intentionally disempowering the parent governors? If the parents were empowered and given an opportunity to be actively and effectively involved in finances, would the results and the nature of their involvement be more productive?

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Appendix 1: Request to conduct research from Department of Education

14 Elmarie Crescent
Morgenster
Cape Town
7784
25 January 2013

Attention: The Head of Department
Department of Basic Education
Province of Western Cape
Private Bag X9183
Cape Town
8000

Dear Madam

Request For permission to conduct research

I am currently studying for Masters in Education at the University of Cape Town. I am also a school principal at Westlake Primary School in Metro South Education District. My aim is to look at the role of school governing bodies (SGBs) in school financial management. In this regard I would like to focus specifically on the role of parent governors in school financial management when they perform the financial management function as stipulated in the South African School's Act of 1996 (SASA). I will utilise a case study of six high schools in the Metro South District which have different quintiles and section 21 and Section 20 statuses. I am required to conduct research as part of the coursework for the degree. I therefore kindly seek permission to do this in the following secondary schools under your jurisdiction in Metro South District.

Fairmount Secondary School, Grassdale Secondary School, Sinethemba Secondary School, Vuyiseka Secondary School, Sophumelela Secondary School and Zisukhanyo Secondary School.

I wish to interview the Principal, the educator representatives on the Governing Body and the Parent members concerned with finances. The study will use interviews, questionnaires and document analysis to collect data. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at a time convenient to them. Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used such that no school or participant can be identified. Participation will always remain voluntary which means that participants may withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish. The research tools are attached for your perusal.

This study is supervised by Mr Dave Gilmour, Tel: 021-650 3287;

E-mail: james.gilmour@uct.ac.za

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Ms L. Diamond

(w) 021 702 6178 © 081766 3901

Email: landie001@live.co.za

Appendix 2: Request to conduct research at the school

14 Elmarie Crescent
Morgenster
Cape Town
7784
25 January 2013

Attention: The Principal
Secondary School
Grassy Park

Dear Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am currently studying for Masters in Education at the University of Cape Town. I am required to conduct a research as part of the coursework for the degree. I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research at your school. The title of my research project is: ***The role of parent governors in school financial management.***

In this study my aim is to look at the role of school governing bodies (SGBs) in school financial management. In this regard I would like to focus specifically on the role of parent governors in school financial management when they perform the financial management function as stipulated by the South African School's Act of 1996 (SASA).. I also hope to interview the educator representatives on the Governing Body and the Parent members concerned with finances. The study will use semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis to collect data. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at a time convenient to them.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

- Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process and fictitious names will be used to represent your school and names.
- All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish.
- You will be contacted in time about the interviews.

This study is supervised by Mr Dave Gilmour; Tel: 021 650 327;
E-mail:james.gilmour@uct.ac.za.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance
Yours sincerely
Ms L. Diamond
(w) 021 702 6178© 081766 3901

Email: landie001@live.co.za

Appendix 3: Request for participation in a research project

14 Elmarie Crescent
Morgenster
Cape Town
7784
25 January 2013

Attention: Parent governor
Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am currently studying for Masters in Education at the University of Cape Town. I am required to conduct research as part of the coursework for the degree. I therefore kindly request you to be part of this study.

The title of my research project is: *The role of parent governors in school financial management.*

In this study my aim is to look at the role of school governing bodies (SGBs) in school financial management. In this regard I would like to focus specifically on the role of parent governors in school financial management when they perform the financial management function stipulated in the South African School's Act of 1996 (SASA). I also hope to interview the Principal, the educator representatives of the Governing Body and the Parent component. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at a time convenient to them.

PLEASE NOTE THAT:

- Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process and fictitious names will be used to represent your names.
- All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish.
- You will be contacted in good time about the interviews

This study is supervised by Mr Dave Gilmour Tel: 021 6503287;
E-mail: james.gilmour@uct.ac.za

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.
Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely
Ms L. Diamond
(w) 021 702 6178 © 081766 3901
Email: landie001@live.co.za

Appendix 4: Declaration

I (Full name of participant)
hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the
study: *The role of parent governors in school financial management*.

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand
everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so
desire.

Signature of Participant: ----- Date-----

Signature of Witness/: -----Date: -----

Thanking you in advance

Ms L. Diamond

(w) 021 702 6178

© 081766 3901

Email: landie001@live.co.za

Appendix 5: Interview with the principal

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Researcher completes the following table

Name of School						
Quintile	1	2	3	4	5	
Section	Section 21			Section 20		
Name of Participant (optional)						
Gender	Male			Female		
Age	20-30	31-40	41-50	51+		
Designation						
How long have you been principal	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16 + years		
Highest professional qualification obtained	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Post Graduate		
How many years have you served on the governing body in a financial capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6+

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is my private study and I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and the chance to learn from you. You know that you are selected because you are currently serving on the SGB.

This is an individual interview to gather information to find out your views when responding to questions looking for parent involvement in school financial management. I will be asking you some questions. The aim of these questions is to find out how involved are the parents in school finances and how do you as an individual see the role parents currently play. I will also ask you questions on how to improve parent involvement.

I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible as, your answers will assist this study to get more information on the role of parent governors in school financial management and can assist to improve the nature of the involvement and transforming SASA stipulations into practice.

Questions for interviews: Principals

A. Background and reasons for involvement.

1. In which quintile is your school? Is it a section 21 or Section 20
2. How do you identify parents to serve on the SGB?
3. What strategies does the school use to get parents more involved in financial matters?
4. What is the structure of your finance committee at this school? How often do you meet?

B. Documents of financial matters (SGB Minutes, Finance Policy, FINCOM Minutes, Training Manual etc.)

1. Do you have a copy of the school's Finance Policy? Who designed it?
2. How does the school make the Finance Policy available to the various stakeholders?
3. Did you have an induction process of how to follow the Finance Policy?
4. How does the school implement the Finance Policy?
5. Would you say your SGB parents understand the contents of the Finance Policy? Please explain.
6. Do you have a copy of the WCED Basic Financial Manual for Schools? How do you make use of the handbook? How does the school make this document available to the staff and parents?
7. Do your SGB parents have access to other financial records at this school? Please explain how you make these financial documents available to parents.
8. Do you have records of all the FINCOM meeting minutes? How are they made available to FINCOM members?

C. Parents' attitude towards financial management

1. What is the attitude of your parents towards their financial management responsibility? Probe: Do they willingly participate?

D. Capacity issues (skills, training and level of education)

1. How are parents involved in making financial decisions at this school?
2. How do parents on the SGB contribute to the budget process? What do they do?

3. Are parent governors involved in fundraising? How effective are they? What role do teachers and you as a principal play in fundraising?
4. Are your parent governors adequately equipped to monitor and control the budget as well as handle financial responsibilities? Please elaborate.
5. Did your SGB parents attend any training on school finances? If yes, was it useful for them? Please explain what the content of the training was.
6. Who do you think should be responsible for training parents?
7. What kind of skills should the next training focus on?

E. Perspective on the role of the principal

1. Particularly in this school what role do you as the principal play in financial management?
2. Do you as the principal inform your SGB parents about the scheduled WCED trainings on financial management? Please elaborate.
3. Besides scheduled WCED trainings does the school organise additional training on financial management?
4. Do you think as a principal you are capacitated sufficiently to perform your financial duties and guide the SGB without depending on the IMG and WCED? Please elaborate.
5. Who normally chairs the FINCOM meetings?
6. Do you inform the SGB members about the scheduled WCED training on financial management?
7. Besides scheduled WCED trainings does the school organise additional training on financial management? Yes or No and give a reason for your response.
8. Do you think your governing body members are capacitated sufficiently to perform their financial duties without depending on you as the principal? Please elaborate.

Additional comments

Do you have any additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview?

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule for Educators

Researcher completes the following table

Name of School						
Quintile	1	2	3	4	5	
Section	Section 21			Section 20		
Name of Participant (optional)						
Gender	Male			Female		
Age	20-30		31-40		41-50	51+
Designation						
How long have you been at the school	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 Years	21+ Years	
Highest school/ academic qualification obtained	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Post Graduate		
How many cycles (not years) have you served on the governing body	1	2	3	4	5	6+
How many years have you served on the governing body in a financial capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6+

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is my private study and I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and the chance to learn from you. You know that you are selected because you are currently serving on the SGB.

This is an individual interview to gather information to find out your views when responding to questions looking for parent involvement in school financial management. I will be asking you some questions. The aim of these questions is to find out how involved are the parents in school finances and how do you as an individual see the role parents currently play. I will also ask you questions on how to improve parent involvement.

I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible as, your answers will assist this study to get more information on the role of parent governors in school financial management and can assist to improve the nature of the involvement and transforming SASA stipulations into practice.

Questions for interviews: Educators

C. Background and reasons for involvement.

5. What is your role on the SGB and how did you get involved?
6. How does the school identify educators to serve on the SGB? Probe: What are the processes involved?
7. How does the school identify parents to serve on the SGB?
8. What strategies does the school use to get GB parents more involved in financial matters?

D. Documents of financial matters (SGB Minutes, Finance Policy, FINCOM Minutes, Training Manual etc.)

9. Do you have a copy of the school's Finance Policy?
10. How does the school make the Finance Policy available to the various stakeholders?
11. Did you have an induction process on how to follow the Finance Policy?
12. Do you understand the Finance Policy? Probe: Are you able to apply it?
13. How does the school implement the Finance Policy?
14. Would you say you as educators and the SGB parents understand the contents of the Finance Policy? Please explain.
15. Do you have a copy of the WCED Basic Financial Manual for Schools? How do you as an SGB make use of the handbook?
16. Do your SGB parents have access to financial records at this school? Please explain how the school makes these financial documents available to educators and parents.
17. Do you have records of all the FINCOM meeting minutes? How are they made available to FINCOM members?

C. Attitude towards financial management

1. What is the attitude of the educators as well as parent SGB members towards their financial management responsibility? Probe: Do they meaningfully participate?

F. Capacity issues (skills, training and level of education)

1. Since you were elected have you undergone any training on school finances if yes what was it and was it useful? If there was no training, is there any specific reason?
2. If your answer to 1 is yes, who conducted the training? Please explain.
3. Who do you think should be responsible for training the SGB?
4. What kind of skills and training do you think educators and parents need to be equipped to do the work that they are expected to do?
5. How do parents on the SGB contribute to the budget process? What do they do?
6. Do you have any previous experience on how to monitor and control the budget?
7. Are you adequately equipped to monitor and control the budget?
8. Are the SGB members adequately equipped to monitor and control the budget?
9. What experience do you have as an SGB member with regard to the financial procedures of the SGB? Probe: Drawing up of the budget, requisition, signatories and issuing of cheques, banking process, procurement payment and petty cash, drawing up of CRJ and CPJ and bank reconciliation statements, drawing up of financial statements, submitting financial information to the WCED.
10. Would you say that you are equipped to handle this financial responsibility?
11. Are the SGB members equipped to handle this financial responsibility?
12. Are parent governors involved in fundraising? How effective are they? What role do you as teachers and the principal play in fundraising?

G. Perspective on the role of the principal

1. Particularly in this school what role does the principal play in financial management?
2. Who normally chairs the FINCOM meetings?
3. What strategies does the principal use to get parents involved in financial matters?
4. Does the principal inform the SGB members about the scheduled WCED training on financial management?

5. Besides scheduled WCED trainings does the school organise additional training on financial management?
6. Do you think your governing body members are capacitated sufficiently to perform their financial duties without depending on you and the principal? Please elaborate.

Additional comments

Do you have any additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview?

Appendix 7: Interview Schedule for Individual Parent Governors

Researcher completes the following table

Name of School						
Quintile	1	2	3	4	5	
Section	Section 21			Section 20		
Name of Parent (optional)						
Gender	Male			Female		
Age	20-30	31-40	41-50	51+		
Occupation						
Designation on the governing body						
Highest school/ academic qualification obtained	Grade 1 - 7	Grade 8-9	Grade 10-12	Diploma/ Certificate	Degree	
How many cycles (not years) have you served on the governing body	1	2	3	4	5	6+
How many years have you served on the governing body in a financial capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6+

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is my private study and I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and the chance to learn from you. You know that you are selected because you are currently serving on the SGB.

This is an individual interview to gather information to find out your views when responding to questions looking for parent involvement in school financial management. I will be asking you some questions. The aim of these questions is to find out how involved are the parents in school finances and how do you as an individual see the role parents currently play. I will also ask you questions on how to improve parent involvement.

I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible as, your answers will assist this study to get more information on the role of parent governors in school financial management and can assist to improve the nature of the involvement and transforming SASA stipulations into practice.

Questions for interviews: Parent Governors

A. Background and the reasons for involvement.

1. How did you get involved in the SGB and why did you get involved? Please explain.
2. Besides working with finances at school do you have any financial management background? Probe: Do you have any accounting background? Why were you asked to serve on the SGB in this capacity?

B. Documents of financial matters (SGB Minutes, Finance Policy, FINCOM Minutes and Training Manual etc.).

18. Do you have a copy of the school financial policy? Who designed it?
19. How does the school make the Finance Policy available to the various stakeholders?
20. Did you have an induction process of how to follow the Finance Policy?
21. Do you understand the Finance Policy?
22. How does the school implement the Finance Policy?
23. Do you have a copy of the WCED Basic Financial Manual for Schools? How do you make use of the handbook?
24. Do you have records of all the FINCOM meeting minutes? How are they made available to FINCOM members?

C. Attitude towards financial management

1. Do you think as parents you should be involved in school finances? Why / why not?
2. What do you think are the duties that you as parents must perform in financial management at school?
3. What do parents do to show an interest in financial issues at this school?

D. Capacity issues (skills, training and level of education).

1. Since you were elected have you undergone any training on school finances if yes what was it and was it useful?
2. Who conducted the training? Please explain.

3. Who do you think should be responsible for training parents?
4. What kind of training do you think you need to be equipped to do the work that you are expected to do?
5. What kind of skills do you need to get more involved in school finances?
6. Do you have any previous experience on how to monitor and control the budget?
7. Are you adequately equipped to monitor and control the budget?
8. Would you say you are equipped to handle this financial responsibility?

E. Understanding of financial processes.

1. What experience do you have as an SGB member with regard to the financial procedures of the SGB? Probe: Drawing up of the budget, requisition, signatories and issuing of cheques, banking process, procurement payment and petty cash, drawing up of CRJ and CPJ and bank reconciliation statements, drawing up of financial statements, submitting financial information to the WCED.
2. As a school governing body how do you arrive at school financial decision making?
3. How are you as parents involved in making financial decisions at this school? Probe: Can you illustrate an example of a situation where you were involved in making a financial decision.
4. Could you please explain how you prepare the budget at your school before it is presented to the rest of the parents? Probe: can you please explain the budget process.
5. As a FINCOM member how do you ensure that the school sticks to its budget when it comes to spending and allocation of funds?

F. Key role performed.

1. As an SGB member what would you say is your role in financial management at the school? Please explain.
2. As FINCOM members how regularly do you meet to attend to school financial matters?

G. Perspectives on the role of the principal.

1. What strategies does the school use to get parents involved in financial matters?
2. Particularly in this school what role does the principal play in financial management?
3. Who normally chairs the FINCOM meetings?
4. Does the principal inform you about the scheduled WCED trainings on financial management? Please elaborate.
5. Besides scheduled WCED trainings does the school organise additional training on financial management?
6. Do you think as a governing body member you are capacitated sufficiently to perform your financial duties without depending on the principal? Please elaborate.

Additional comments:

Do you have any additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview?

Appendix 8: Parent Questionnaire

1. School: _____

2. Questionnaire number e.g.01 to 30

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Dear SGB Member

I am doing research in a number of schools on the issues facing SGB's and school finances. As a school principal I have observed that different schools have different ways of dealing with financial matters, and with the consent of the principal at your school I would like to find out how you have dealt with the duties you have faced.

This survey is authorized by the University of Cape Town and the Western Cape Department of Education. You are requested to answer the questions as honestly as possible. There are no wrong or right answers; your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely. All information you provide will be treated as confidential and used only for research purposes by the researcher, for the purposes of the study analysing data and preparing the research report. Please answer all the sections.

The completed questionnaire will be collected on a stipulated date to be announced later.

Yours sincerely

Landeka Diamond

Work: (021) 702 6178

Cell: 081766 3901

SECTION A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Complete the following table

Name of School						
Name of Parent (optional)						
Gender	<u>Male</u>			<u>Female</u>		
Age	20-30	31-40	41-50	51+		
Occupation						
Designation on the governing body						
Highest school/ academic qualification obtained	Grade 1 - 7	Grade 8-9	Grade 10-12	Diploma/ Certificate	Degree	
How many cycles (not years) have you served on the governing body	1	2	3	4	5	6+
How many years have you served on the governing body in a financial capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6+

SECTION B:

FINANCIAL DUTIES

1. Below are some questions about some of the responsibilities of SGB members.
Please use the code below to answer the questions.

1 = Very Poor 2 = Poor 3 = Average 4 = Good 5 = Excellent

<u>As a governing body member how would you rate your knowledge of the following SASA stipulations?</u>	Code	RATING
To start and administer a school fund.	1	
Open and maintain one banking account.	2	
Keep the financial records of the school.	3	
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval.	4	
Draw up and submit financial statements to the Department of Education.	5	
Buy text books and educational material for the school.	6	
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED to improve the quality of education.	7	
Ensure that school fees are collected according to the decisions that were made by the school governing body.	8	
Applications for exemption from school fees.	9	

SECTION C:

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

CODING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, with one indicating that you see the issue as a priority and five indicating that the issue is not that important.

1 - Most Important 2 - Very Important 3 - Important 4 - Less Important 5 – Least Important.

STATEMENT	CODE	RATING
Parents should be involved in school finances.	1	
Parents should attend all FINCOM meetings.	2	
Fundraising should be driven by parents.	3	

a) Do you think parents should have any financial duties at all?

Please circle your response

YES 1

NO 2

NOT SURE 3

☐

b) Please explain your response to (a).

SECTION D:

CAPACITY ISSUES

a) Do you fully understand your financial management responsibilities?

Please circle the correct response

YES 1

NO 2

NOT SURE 3

☐

b) In the last year did you attend any training on school financial management?

Yes	
No	

c) Please explain the content of the training

d) If the answer to B is YES, was the training useful? Please explain.

e) If the answer to B is NO why was is not useful?

f) What kind of other training do you think you need to be equipped to do the work that you are expected to do?

g) Do you have any difficulty in transferring the SASA stipulations into practice?

Please indicate your answer by putting a cross in the appropriate box.

<u>As a governing body member how would you rate your knowledge of the following SASA stipulations?</u>	Code	Yes	No	Sometimes
To start and administer a school fund.	1			
Open and maintain one banking account.	2			
Keep the financial records of the school.	3			
Prepare an annual budget and submit to parents for approval.	4			
Draw up and submit financial statements to the Department of Education.	5			
Buy text books and educational material for the school.	6			
Supplement the funds supplied by the WCED to improve the quality of education.	7			
Ensure that school fees are collected according to the decisions that were made by the school governing body.	8			
Applications for exemption from school fees.	9			

h) Did you ever experience that the principal and or educators do the job on behalf of the parent governors due to lack of skills from the parents' side

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

i) Please explain

SECTION E

ROLE PERFORMED IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Rate the following statements on a scale 1 – 5 indicating your role in the following:

1 = Not at all 2 = Very infrequently 3 = Frequently 4 = Most of the time 5 = All the time

	CODE	RATING
I contribute to the budget process	1	
I am involved in fundraising	2	
I attend FINCOM meetings	3	
I am involved in buying textbooks for the learners	4	
I am familiar with the contents of our school's Finance Policy	5	
Parent governors are involved in financial decision making.	6	

Thank you for your valuable time and effort.

Appendix 9: Parent Questionnaire Code Description

Section A

Personal Information

Gender

1 = Male

2 = Female

Age

1 = 20 – 30

2 = 31 – 40

3 = 41 – 50

4 = 51+

Occupation

1 = Professional

2 = Skilled

3 = Unskilled

4 = Self employed

5 = Unemployed

Designation on the Governing body

1 = Chairperson

2 = Treasurer

3 = Secretary

4 = Additional Member of the governing body

Highest school / academic qualification obtained

1 = Grade 1 – 7

2 = Grade 8 – 9

3 = Grade 10 – 12

4 = Diploma/Certificate

5 = Degree

Section B

Financial Duties

1 = Very poor

2 = Poor

3 = Average

4 = Good

5 = Excellent

Section C

Attitudes Towards Financial Involvement

C 1

1 = Most Important

2 = Very Important

3 = Important

4 = Less Important

5 = Least Important

C 2

1 = Yes

2 = No

3 = Not sure

C 3

1 = To be more involved

2 = To assist them to run finances better

3 = Assist with fundraising

Section D

Capacity Issues

D 1

1 = Yes

2 = No

3 = Not Sure

D 2

1 = Yes

2 = No

D 3

1 = SGB and Finances

2 = Roles and responsibilities

3 = Not applicable

D 4

1 = Knowledge on finances

2 = Knowledge on roles and responsibilities

3 = Not applicable

D 5

1 = Not learned anything new

2 = Training was not relevant

D 6

1 = Further financial training

2 = Computer training

3 = Fundraising

4 = Not applicable

D 7

1 = Yes

2 = No

3 = Sometimes

D 8

1 = Yes

2 = No

3 = Sometimes

D 9

1 = Principal and teachers know more (more skilled)

2 = They can use computers

3 = Not equipped

4 = Illiterate

5 = Not applicable

Section E Role Performed In Financial Management

E 1

1 = Not at all

2 = Very infrequently

3 = Frequently

4 = Most of the time

5 = All the time